

The New Leader

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The New Leader

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Packing the Jury

"If there could be found suitable additions to the Council there was good reason for some addition to their numbers, so that in cases where so much depended upon the moral authority of their decision, their decision might be recognised by the world as authoritative."—Sir Austen Chamberlain, at Birmingham.

The New Leader



The Week's News.

Civil War?

The I.L.P. has decided to submit to the Labour and Socialist International a proposal for a Conference with the Third International. Our object is to discover whether a basis exists on which proposals for unity might be founded. The central obstacle, as we see it, is the belief which this Communist International proclaimed, when it was founded, that civil war is the inevitable outcome of the class struggle. A party which holds that belief must base all its strategy upon it. It will take no pains to avoid the predestined conflict with arms; it will work with destruction, rather than construction, as its immediate objective. For our part we refuse to say "inevitable": we should see in civil war the ruin of our hopes; if it must come, we would take care that it can come only by the revolt of a lawless Fascist minority against a Socialist Majority Government. If this difference of opinion is unbridgeable, it is useless to talk of "a united front." But is it? We have good reasons for believing that of late many Communists have come to think—as Marx and Engels thought—that in democratic countries civil war is not the inevitable and necessary method. The French Party has just issued a pamphlet to this effect. If this obstacle can be removed, the ugly doctrine of the Dictatorship must go with it, and unity becomes possible.

Mr. Henderson, to our regret, has issued a stiffly-worded manifesto, which warns us that in this effort to explore the chances of reunion, we must expect no support from the Labour Party. His argument is, briefly, that the attempt was made, in vain, in 1922: that nothing has changed in Communist doctrine, and that any approach to Moscow is a mistake. It may turn out that we are exaggerating the tendency to a revision of tactics. But to us it seems that the evil and the scandal of the feud which divides the workers' movement on the Continent (and to a much less extent here), and in some countries reduces it to impotence, is so great, that we would risk failure after failure, rebuff after rebuff, in the effort to end it. Over half Europe Labour is paralysed and downtrodden by reason of this schism: and elsewhere it is drifting, through the loss of its more ardent vanguard, into a peculiarly inert and unprogressive form of Liberalism. Mr. Henderson's answer sets up a new and even more deadly doctrine of the "inevitable." If it be inevitable that this feud should rage for ever, if rival workers' parties must always neutralise each other in the face of the common enemy, if even the search for a basis of unity must be abandoned, then it is hopeless, in most of the sister-democracies of Europe, to dream of Socialism in our time. The I.L.P. rejects this doctrine of defeatism.

The outsider often sees most of the game, but we doubt whether the leader-writer of the *Daily News* is correct in his interpretation of the differences which have arisen between Mr. MacDonald and the I.L.P. He connects them with Mr. Spoor's proposals for a Liberal alliance:—

It is fairly obvious what is happening. Mr. MacDonald and the more astute of his colleagues are in favour of a measure of co-operation with the Liberals. The I.L.P. stands in the way as the self-constituted guardians of Socialist orthodoxy. That, the *Daily News* guesses, explains the "venom" and "the waspish ridicule" of his comments in the *Socialist Review* on our Living Wage Policy. The mistake may arise from the leader-writer's unfamiliarity with the Scottish language. When a new idea explodes in Mr. MacDonald's neighbourhood, he invariably addresses a series of comradely pleasantries to the authors. These range from such epithets as "casie-oosie asses" (a genial phrase) to "editor" (which is rather more severe). But experience proves that these forms of address are meant to indicate that Mr. MacDonald is considering the idea.

Meanwhile, it is important to make clear the meaning of the action which the I.L.P. has taken against Mr. Spoor. It has neither "expelled" him, nor "excommunicated" him. It has said, rightly and inevitably, that if he stands again for Parliament it will not be the body responsible for his candidature. Like every other nominating body in the Party, it has the duty of choosing men who will be loyal exponents of its point of view. Mr. Spoor, whose article, besides proposing the fusion of Liberalism and Labour into a "united People's Party," described the I.L.P. as a body of "vulgar extremists," and seemed to relegate Socialism to the world of theory. Now, the I.L.P. stood from the first for two things—for the independence of Labour in the face of every other party, and for Socialism as a system attainable in our own day and generation. It is rightly tolerant towards many eccentricities of opinion within its ranks, but its plain duty is to select representatives who will advance these two ideas.

Lord Weir and Wages

The Labour Party has this week defined, sharply and decisively, its attitude to Lord Weir's houses. It makes no objection to the use of steel or other substitutes for brick: nor has it any thought of depriving the consumer of the advantages which may ultimately come from the methods of mass production. The building trades are willing, moreover, that the engineers who work in the factory in producing the walls and window-frames and doors of these metal houses should be classified as engineers and not as builders, and paid at engineering rates. They no more concern themselves with the conditions in the factory than they do with those in the brickfield. Their interest begins when the manufactured parts are erected on the site. The men who dig the foundations and the electricians who install the lights must be reckoned and paid as builders, and not as engineers. That is a most moderate and reasonable claim. The whole Party is with them and has supported them with its vote. It is amazing that any Government can interpret the fair wages clause in any other way. By resisting it Lord Weir confesses that his invention is a device for undermining the workers' standards.

This solution of the controversy is in line with Trade Union tradition. But it leaves untouched the real tragedy of the situation. Why must engineers' wages be lower than builders' wages? It is not inferior skill which explains it. One trade is over-manned, while the other can profit by the scarcity of its labour in the market. The Fair Wages Clause does not touch this anomaly: it merely provides that public bodies shall pay wages no lower than those paid by the best firms in a particular trade. And that, as Mr. Citrine shows, is in the case of the engineers inhumanly low. The employers have just met them with the threat that any attempt on their part to raise these wages

(which average 56s. 6d. for skilled men and 40s. 2d. for unskilled), even in prosperous sections or districts, will be met by a national lock-out. The whole Movement must range itself behind the engineers. The time has come to broaden the fight into a general demand for the Living Wage.

George Lansbury has taken the initiative in calling a meeting in the Albert Hall on Sunday evening (7.30 p.m.) to demand the release of the twelve Communist leaders and the South Wales miners. It is the duty of every loyal member of the I.L.P. to attend. We must fill the hall, and make it clear to this Government of reaction that no differences of doctrine or tactics have the slightest weight with us when the right of free opinion is at stake. If we differ from these Communist leaders, all the more must we demand, for our own sake even more than for theirs, that the difference shall be settled by free debate and open discussion. Let this meeting be our answer to the most reckless Home Secretary of modern times—to his organised provocation of class war, to his plans to intimidate the miners in their struggle for bread, to his toleration of Fascist outrage, to his attack upon free speech.

Belgian Fascism

The *Daily Herald* had a startling piece of news this week. A Fascist organisation in Belgium has attempted a demonstration which seems to have been a childish effort to seize the Ministers and overthrow the Coalition Government. The police were strong enough to cope with it, but for the future the Socialist Party has determined to leave nothing to chance. It is organising a disciplined defence force from its own ranks, under a staff of men with military experience. The news is significant, precisely because the Belgian Party, though it is one of the most efficient, is also one of the most moderate sections of the European movement.

In France, meanwhile, the Socialists in the Chamber have at last voted in a body against the credits for the imperialist adventures in Syria and Morocco. The Government was actually defeated, though it swallowed its pride. It will manage in the end to carry only a ragged fragment of its Budget, and further inflation must follow. And, then? And then, one begins to suspect, there may be some kind of Fascist move to counteract in France as well as Belgium.

Indian Prisons

As far back as January 26 the Indian Assembly carried a resolution which called for a general amnesty for political prisoners, especially those imprisoned without trial. Next month this issue became urgent. A hunger strike was begun by the twenty-five political prisoners in Mandalay Jail. These men are suspects, arrested under the Bengal Ordinance (to which the Labour Government unhappily gave its sanction), who have never been tried. They include, with other well-known and respected men, the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation. Their reason for adopting this extreme form of protest is given as "general ill-treatment."

Is the charge true, or rather is it probable? To judge of that there is the evidence given before the Jail Committee in 1919-20. A British officer, Colonel Mulvaney, who was superintendent of Alipore Jail, told that Committee

- (1) that political prisoners were systematically ill-treated, and
- (2) that he was forced to publish false reports about their conditions.

The news from Mandalay led to yet another debate in the Indian Legislative Assembly, and once more a motion on behalf of the prisoners was carried by an overwhelming majority. One reads without conviction the statement of the Home Member that conditions have improved since Colonel Mulvaney gave evidence. Then why are these prisoners hunger-striking? We trust that the Labour Party will demand the release of these untried men.

The League of Nations has set its face against chattel slavery of every kind, and last year a Convention was drafted for its suppression. But that very Convention gave a fresh sanction to the new-fangled slavery known as forced labour.

Meanwhile there are ominous signs that the forces of oppression are gaining ground—hints from influential quarters that the West African system of free native cultivators is uneconomic, and the dismissal of a high official in Kenya whose actions showed an "uneconomic" respect for native rights.

Under these circumstances the decision of the International Labour Office to examine the whole question of forced labour is of the first importance.

Buried Cities

Under the skin of every man and every nation lie layers upon layers of the still living past. We are used to the discoveries which unearth great civilisations in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Crete, but the digging which is now going on in the desert of Sind opens a new world. Under the mounds of sand in the Indus Valley Sir John Marshall and his Indian colleagues are finding cities which date from the period of transition from the stone age to bronze (3,000 to 2,000 B.C.), and beneath these again are rich traces of still earlier cultures. It was a great and prosperous civilisation, grouped round massive temples. The houses had baths and drainage. The seals show pictographic writing and a high level of artistic skill. It was a civilisation akin to that of Sumeria, with which it must have traded by sea, but it seems to have been more than a colony. It will be exciting, as the digging goes on, to discover how these records of early Indian history affect the theories of Dr. Rivers and Prof. Elliot-Smith, who believe that all these early civilisations, from Cornwall to Mexico, were in origin one.

The men, as they depicted themselves, were low-browed and broad-headed, with flat noses and thick lips. Evidently they were the dark Dravidians, whom the invading Aryans affected to despise, banned as unclean, and pictured as monkeys. But the fact would seem to be that these Aryans were the barbarians, who overthrew a much higher civilisation. Everywhere these kinsmen and ancestors of ours came as destroyers—to Crete, to India, and eventually to the Græco-Roman world. The Nordic race had invariably a great conceit of itself, but the explorer's spade is teaching us modesty.

¶ We shall publish next week summaries of two of the most important pieces of constructive work which the I.L.P. has yet undertaken. One of them deals with the organisation of industry in the Socialist State—the co-ordination of the key industries, the meaning of workers' control, and the tactics to be followed in the struggle for democracy in the workshop (*Trade Unions and Socialism*, price 2d.). The other is a report on the problems of India.

¶ The figure on the opposite page is from a drawing by J. F. Millet.



Fascist Discipline

In Southern Tyrol a cow was arrested because she did not yield Chianti. [Munich *Simplicissimus*]

Back the Engineers!

by Walter M. Citrine

Acting Secretary of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress

ARE the employers deliberately provoking a conflict with Labour on an unprecedented scale? That is the query which the threat of the engineering employers to lock out the workers will arouse in many minds.

For the past few years a lugubrious wail has gone forth from the employers. Almost everywhere, according to them, manufacturers are daily facing difficulties which perplex the organising capacity and initiative of the most efficient of the captains of industry. For a brief period, beginning with the advent of the Labour Government in 1924, the pessimism which had for so long characterised the thinking of British industrialists gave way to a restrained optimism. The struggle of the locomotive men to prevent a material reduction in their rates, the effort of the dockers, the bus men, the shipbuilding, and building trades, to regain something of the wages advantages which had been wrenched away from them in the abyss of the depression, had met with a degree of success which afforded reasonable grounds for the anticipation that the tide had turned, and that wages movements would once again be on the up-grade. Applications for wages increases were forthcoming from Unions in several of the principal industries, amongst them being mining and engineering.

THE Unions in these industries were met, in both cases, with exhortations about the still parlous conditions of industry, which, according to the employers, made it impossible to concede increases. Protracted negotiations followed, but the expected advances did not materialise.

The outcome in the mining industry is still fresh in the minds of the public. The crisis was temporarily averted, the Government granting financial assistance and establishing a Royal Commission to investigate the industry.

Public attention has been so much focussed on the work of this Commission and on the possibility of a conflict at the end of the subsidy period, that the engineering situation remained in comparative obscurity until the last week or so. But there has been a conviction growing up amongst the workers that an attack is impending, not only on the standards of the miners, but upon the whole of the workers. Probably never in recent years has there been such a state of tension amongst practically all sections of the community, nor among thoughtful people a clearer recognition of the dangers which lie ahead. Appeals for a better understanding in industry have been earnest and frequent.

INTO this atmosphere, charged with inflammable and combustible constituents, the engineering employers have flung the smouldering brand of a threatened lock-out. Their action passes comprehension, and displays such a reckless disregard for the consequences (emanating as it does probably from the most powerful combination of employers in the world), that it makes one wonder what is at the back of it.

It would appear that the employers have deliberately determined to enforce a lock-out of the members of the principal Engineering Unions as and from March 13, 1926. The ostensible reason is an alleged breach of the Agreement known as The Provisions for Avoiding Disputes by a section of engineering workers employed by Messrs. R. Hoe. There has been an attempt to resist the employment of non-unionists and to secure an advance in wages. The dispute is entirely unofficial and is not countenanced by the Unions whose members are involved; but because of it the engineering employers are ready to plunge the whole engineering industry into a bitter struggle.

That their policy is deliberate cannot for one moment be doubted. The lock-out has long been a favourite weapon with that organisation, and no consideration of public convenience has ever been discernible as influencing them in the slightest degree against the fullest use of their economic power. As far back as 1878, in a prolonged and calamitous engineering dispute, the federation resorted to the lock-out. In 1920 the members of the Electrical Trades Union were locked out by the engineering employers because of a dispute at Peniston. In the year

1922 once again the lock-out was employed in a futile endeavour to force defeat upon the Unions in respect of the so-called "Managerial Functions." If memory serves me rightly, Sir Allan Smith on that occasion threatened that, if the Unions accepted the challenge and a lock-out resulted, their members would return to work upon the employers' terms as to wages and conditions. He proved to be wrong, and the dispute ended as inconclusively as it had begun.

MY purpose here is not to discuss the intimate details which have led up to this latest threat. The Engineering Unions possess some of the most experienced and ablest representatives in the Trade Union world, and they can be trusted to know how best to handle the situation. It may not be out of place, however, to observe that although the Hoe dispute would appear to furnish the excuse for a lock-out, that incident cannot be dissociated from the negotiations which have dragged their weary way over the past two years. Men who are in receipt of wages entirely out of proportion to their degree of skill, and labourers who receive 37s. per week for 47 hours' work, cannot reasonably be expected to exhibit Job-like patience. The average time rates in the sixteen principal districts are: fitters and turners, 56s. 6d.; unskilled labourers, 40s. 2d.

Nearly two years ago the Unions presented a national application for an advance of 20s. per week. The employers retorted with a demand for an increase in the hours of the day and night shifts and a reduction of overtime rates. The interminable negotiations have created the impression amongst rank-and-file engineering workers that the employers were deliberately operating a policy of procrastination and had no real intention of making any concessions. From time to time during the past two years district applications have been presented for advances which appear to have had substantial justification, but practically everywhere the districts have been met with refusal on the plea that, while national negotiations were proceeding, nothing could be conceded locally. When at last on January 28 the Unions informed the employers in conference that they regarded the negotiations as terminated, a very thinly veiled threat was made that the employers would not hesitate to use their maximum power to resist any attempt at improvement.

This has now been crystallised by the pronouncement of the employers that any action by the Unions, whether nationally, locally, or sectionally, would be resisted by the lock-out.*

THE attitude of the Press in respect of this ultimatum will be interesting to watch. Will the newspapers be as united in denouncing the disruptive and anti-social tactics of the engineering employers as they were of the action of the Trades Union Congress in July last? Will they raise their voices to protest in the name of that elusive and intangible thing, "the public"? Or, as this appears to be a dispute which may be settled by the simple process of slowly starving the workers into subjection, without entailing any material inconvenience to those who arrogate to themselves the title of The Community, will the Press perhaps see here only a case for firm salutary disciplinary action by the employers?

Sir Allan Smith recently remarked that any disturbance which takes place now will have a serious effect upon the future of the industry. He has said that it may be an easy thing to light a fire, but a very difficult thing to put it out. One does not wish to say anything which will aggravate the situation, but Sir Allan should remember that there is a different spirit prevailing to-day amongst Trade Unionists than was the case in 1922. Perhaps, upon reflection, he and his colleagues will realise the full significance of his own phrase.

* The employers' threat reads: That any action by the Unions as a body or by any Union or Unions taken for the purpose of enforcing an advance of wages, either nationally, locally, or sectionally, contrary to the policy of the Federation as set out in this resolution, be resisted to the fullest extent, even if necessary by a lock-out of the members of the Union or Unions concerned.

To I.L.P. Branches The John Syme Testimonial

COMMITTEE:

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Honorary Secretary and Treasurer: James Adams, 3, Park Hill, London, S.W. 4.

FOR a number of years the name of Ex-Inspector John Syme has been prominently before the British Public, and much sympathy has been felt for him in his long struggle with the Police Authorities over his dismissal from the Metropolitan Police Force.

It is not our purpose to discuss the justice of Mr. Syme's grievance. It is sufficient to quote from the Report of the Commission of Enquiry instituted by the Labour Government in July, 1924:

"Par. 32.—It will be evident from what we have already said, that we consider that there was much in the proceedings connected with his transfer and with his suspension to which Mr. Syme could justly take exception and which would naturally leave him with a sense of grievance."

Mr. Syme's transfer followed on his support of two constables on a point of duty; it is officially admitted that Mr. Syme saved his subordinates from undeserved punishment; and that he acted honourably and in the best sense of duty to those under him no one disputes. He sacrificed his career and his family, and he has suffered grievously since, whilst his colleagues and successors in the Police Service have greatly benefited thereby in their improved conditions of pay and service.

The Committee which, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Robert Smillie, M.P., helped him to recover his liberty, feel that Mr. Syme has suffered so much that it is essential that he and Mrs. Syme should be put in a position to be free from financial worry, and on their advice he has, since his release, been successfully lecturing in many parts of the country, carrying on general propaganda in the public interest under the auspices of Labour.

Mr. Syme's long struggle and consequent incarcerations from time to time have left him in reduced circumstances. We feel, therefore, very strongly that a National Testimonial should be raised to free Mr. and Mrs. Syme from future financial anxiety, and to show public appreciation of the courage and persistency with which Mr. Syme has fought so long, so arduous and so difficult a struggle. We confidently appeal to the Labour Movement as well as to Mr. Syme's many admirers outside Labour circles for a response which will prove that, whatever our diverse views as to his methods and tactics, we can all admire his honesty of purpose, his fearless persistence and his unselfish sacrifice on behalf of his comrades of lower rank.

Contributions and donations should be sent to the Honorary treasurer, Mr. James Adams, 3, Park Hill, London, S.W. 4, who will also be pleased to book lecture engagements. Phone, Brixton 3058.

ROBERT SMILLIE, M.P. (Chairman) } On behalf
C. P. TREVELYAN, M.P. } of the
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ALEX GOSSIP (General Secretary, Nat. Amal. Furn. Trades Assn.).

In order not to clash with the I.L.P. Special Effort Fund, this appeal (issued to other sections of Labour in September last) was withheld from I.L.P. branches. It is felt, however, that the Fund should not be closed without affording I.L.P. members and others who have not yet done so—an opportunity to show their appreciation of Mr. Syme. An early and hearty response is hoped and looked for.

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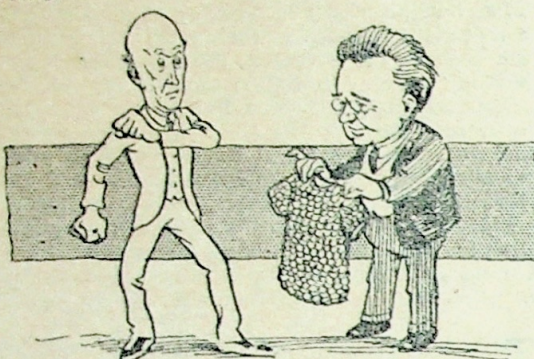
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Sidelights on Parliament

What of the Locarno Spirit? by Arthur Ponsonby, M.P.

SOMEbody suggested to me the other day that instead of referring in appreciative terms to the parliamentary efforts of Labour members, it would be more useful if I adopted a highly critical tone, making caustic comments on their style, their method, their manner, and the substance of their speeches. This might be all very well if I sat up aloft in the Press gallery, an anonymous spectator, but as I mix in close association with my colleagues I would not, even if the editor supplied me with a shirt of chain armour, take upon myself the rôle of a captious critic.



If the Editor gave me a shirt of chain armour.

To do this I should have to be an exemplary exponent of the art of parliamentary oratory, whereas I am only a good third-rate speaker, and I should have to be conscious of the deficiencies of my colleagues, whereas I honestly believe that in our Party we have as good material for speaking and debating as in any other quarter of the House. Added to this we have the supreme advantage of having men who can speak with first-hand knowledge and experience of many of the worst social evils which from time to time come up for discussion in Parliament. It is not too much to say that even in these comparatively dull days whatever colour and sparkle appear in our debates come from the Labour benches. So I shall not take my friend's advice.

The debate last week on the Ministry of Pensions might have drifted into dull officialism, had it not been for the fusillade of pertinent questions which came in the speeches of fifteen at least of the members sitting on our benches. We had an example of the Tory back-bench method of dealing with unemployment in the motion of Sir A. Shirley Benn, which amounted, as Mr. Lunn said, to shovelling the unemployed off to some part of the Empire overseas while there are millions of acres in this country which might properly be utilised.

The debate on the Air estimates was disturbing, but interesting. It is amazing how this new service has grown up and how quickly the House can be distracted by technicalities from appreciating the real significance of an air force—the most deadly, diabolical, and devastating development of our new conceptions of warfare. Sir Samuel Hoare told us a great deal about aircraft industry, Empire air routes, and long-distance flights, the building of airships, and the department of research, but he refrained from giving us any picture of air warfare.

Major Attlee made an admirable reply on our behalf. He expressed his profound scepticism as to what is called "air defence." Of course he is right and has all the experts behind him. The air force is not and cannot be a defensive force at all. It must be purely aggressive. "Surely," he asked, "we ought to have something better from the Locarno spirit than this estimate of 10 millions."

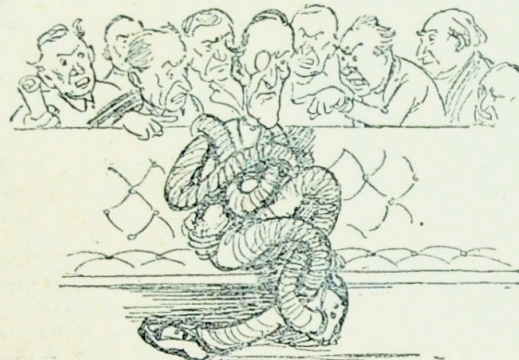
He pleaded for a Ministry of Defence under which the three services should be co-ordinated. In this he had the support of many members on the Tory benches, on the grounds of efficiency and economy. But there is a great deal more in this proposal than that. A future Labour Government will have to consider it from other points of view, which perhaps I may have an opportunity of elaborating on a future occasion. It is noteworthy that hardly a speaker, from the Tory Sir F. Sykes and the Liberal Captain Guest to the uncompromising pacifist, Mr.

J. H. Hudson, avoided reference to the appalling possibilities of aerial warfare. The expression of doubt on all sides whether security can be gained by increased armaments of this description, shows a different outlook from that which prevailed when we had only the Navy and Army to take into account. The truth, of course, is that if we darkened the light from heaven by squadrons of aeroplanes we should be still further from security than we are now.

I was sorry we had no opportunity of hearing Mr. Maxton introduce his Bill to nationalise the Bank of England. Mr. Kirkwood was very suspicious about the technical objections which prevented the introduction of this Bill, and he had some altercation with the Speaker on the subject, in which, however, he showed that it was not against the Speaker personally that he was tilting.

The debate on Monday ranged round Export Credits. It was significant that both Tory and Liberal members pressed for their extension to Russia.

At about five o'clock one of the larger committee rooms was filled to overflowing by members of all Parties, who assembled to hear Sir Austen Chamberlain on the question which, for the moment, overshadows all others—the membership of the Council of the League of Nations.



An uncomfortable moment for the Government

Members seem to have been disappointed at the hour and a quarter's dissertation they received, and some were very much concerned; no one was impressed. The division bell apparently saved the Foreign Secretary from a rigorous heckling. When the Foreign Secretary said, as he did at question time, that it was a mistake for any delegate to the Council to commit himself irrevocably to a certain line of policy before the Council meets, we, on our side, can say just as emphatically that it is a mistake for a Foreign Secretary to commit himself to a certain line of action before he has ascertained the views of his Parliament, or even of his own Cabinet. There is to be a statement later in the week which will inevitably lead to a debate. This is certainly the most uncomfortable moment the Government has had yet, and members of Parliament appear to be fully aware of the critical nature of the issues which will have to be decided within the next week.

(Illustrations by Flambo)

The March

P L E B S

Forty pages fourpence

THE COAL CRISIS

Special articles by A. J. COOK, S. O. DAVIES, F. RATCLIFFE, A. EVANS, JOHN HAMILTON and others.

TWICE DEAD

An incident of the Bavarian Revolution by
ERNST TOLLER
Special Book Review Section

Plebs, 162a, Buckingham Palace Road
London, S.W.1

Letters to the Editor

The Oppressed Tyrolean.

YOU state in the NEW LEADER of February 19 that the peace settlement made the League the guardian of the racial minorities which it placed under alien rule, referring especially to the German population in the territory annexed by Italy.

Can you explain your exact reason for putting this responsibility upon the League, since Italy did not make any "minority treaty" with the other allied Powers, allowing the Council of the League any right of protest? It is very important for us to press upon the members of the Council of the League their duty where they have any treaty right to interfere. It is, however, more difficult for them to do so without this treaty right. Minorities are not mentioned in the Covenant of the League. We can hope to make the League guardianship more effective for the German minorities in Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, but it is necessary to recognise that the situation is different in Italy. If you can suggest any way in which the League can effectively protect the Germans in Italy, it would be interesting to know what course you recommend.

HILDA CLARK.

[It is, of course, the case that Italy, unlike the Succession States, signed no minority treaty. The matter, like any other circumstance "which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations," can be raised under Article 11 of the Covenant. —ED. N.L.]

An Agricultural Religion?

WITH much of what Mr. Russell has to say in his brilliant review of Trotsky's book I find myself in hearty agreement, but it is difficult to see why he should go out of his way to make a contemptuous reference to Christianity as "an agricultural religion." Mr. Russell is perfectly entitled to his own view of the universe, and his stimulating works contain ample expression of it. On the other hand, he has somewhere (I cannot find the reference at the moment) referred to the creative life portrayed in the Gospels, and shown his warm approval of it. I know that he rejects the view of the universe which lies behind that picture, but I cannot for the life of me see why the core of the New Testament message should be dismissed as "agricultural." Loving God, and one's neighbour as oneself, finding an especially warm place in one's heart for little children, condemning hypocrisy in language as stirring as any Mr. Russell uses, defending the widow and the fatherless, this surely is possible, and even necessary, in an industrial civilisation.

Possibly Mr. Russell would rejoin that the Christian ethic is not a part of the essence of the Christian religion, and the lives of many so-called Christians may provide him with some justification. The fact remains, however, that for all the great disciples of Christ the ethic is vital, and that its outlook is universal, not agricultural, nor for that matter, industrial. Mr. Russell dismisses Mr. Brailsford's reference to the churches which consist almost entirely of miners, but the social and intellectual value of Christianity to them vitiates his whole argument.

M. WATCYN-WILLIAMS.

Mr. Edgar C. Willis also writes to contradict Mr. Russell's assertion that Christianity is an agricultural religion.

The Commonwealth of India Bill.

WITH some of the points raised by Messrs. Scurr and Howell you have dealt so adequately that we have no wish to add to your remarks. As regards the Madras Labour Union, however, it is the one solitary Labour organisation which has supported the Bill, and it is worth while to note that its new President is one who is "pledged to unswerving loyalty with the Outer Head (Mrs. Annie Besant) for any object which she declares to be the work of the Masters"—whoever they are.

K. M. PANIKKAR, T. P. SINHA.

MY LITERARY CAREER

No. XIII. By HOPE PORTREY

Miss Hope Portrey's experiences, recounted below, justify the advice, so often given by the Principal of the Premier School of Journalism, that writers with no previous successful experience should attempt article writing in the first instance, or, if they have the necessary time, study both branches simultaneously.



Miss Hope Portrey

oh! how I hated it! Drudgery! And to escape from it, in every leisure hour I withdrew into my beautiful world of Romance, where lived delightful people who were never dull or stupid or cross, who, whatever else they did, never, never pounded their pianos or squalled upon their violins like cats in agony!

Finally I had to give up, and come home to England for a complete rest—always haunted by the knowledge that as soon as I was fit, I must go back to the dreaded grind of teaching for my living.

Then I saw in a magazine an advertisement of The Premier School of Journalism, sent for a prospectus, and joined up right away as a correspondence pupil of their article writing

EVER since I can remember, I have loved making up stories.

I wrote because I couldn't help it; and surreptitiously, because I was always supposed to be doing something more important—something which would fit me for the stern business of earning my living later on.

So I became a music teacher, but

course—a course that the School often recommends to new writers, since it teaches so much that is helpful towards story writing afterwards.

Within a week I had an article published in the *Daily Mail*. The thrill of it! This was Romance come true! If Mr. Meggy had been handy, I should have hugged him. Instead, I hugged the *Daily Mail*, and—wrote another article.

As the course progressed, so did I. You simply can't help it, with Mr. Meggy to boost you. His enthusiasm is dynamic. His energy, optimism, and patience are boundless. His every lesson is a revelation, while his personal letters and criticisms are just exactly what each individual pupil needs. He is the most inspiring and sympathetic of teachers. He showed me at once where I had failed and why. He taught me not to wait for inspiration and then write with my heart's blood; but to see "copy" in the most ordinary things, and write in a business-like way, with an eagle eye upon technicalities and the requirements of editors. I had never bothered about their requirements before; only about my own!

Mr. Meggy is right about the value of article work. It helps to make one practical and opens one's eyes to many technicalities. To me it made all the difference in the world, for, apart from articles, I am now selling every story I write, and could sell double the number had I more time and energy. No more teaching for me! Mr. Meggy has launched me in a profession that is ten times more lucrative, and ten thousand times more fascinating.

Is it any wonder I consider the fees paid to The Premier School of Journalism the *Hope Portrey* best investment of my life?

SUCCESS DURING TUITION

Extracts from letters all dated January, 1926, from pupils actually undergoing instruction, and, in most cases, with no previous experience

"The Editor of the *Royal Magazine* offered me ten guineas for the little story I wrote for the fourth lesson, and on my accepting his offer, he wrote suggesting that I should do a short series of tales about the character. During the Christmas holidays I wrote a second instalment, and he accepted by return of post, offering me another ten guineas for it."—Worthing.

"I have had articles accepted by the *Daily Express*, *Liverpool Courier*, *Glasgow Herald* and *Daily Herald*."—Braintree.

"Accepted articles, up to the time of writing, number five."—Sheffield.

"I have had an article accepted by the *Daily Mail*."—Didcot.

"I have had a 2,000 word article accepted by the *Woman's Magazine*."—London.

"I have had nine articles accepted, seven by the *Sheffield Telegraph* and two by *Home Notes*."—Northwood.

"During the last five or six weeks I have averaged somewhere round £2 a week—spare-time work."—Filey.

"You will be pleased to hear that my story has been accepted by *Eve*. They have given me £10 10s."—Sheffield.

"The *Daily Express* printed the article I did for the second exercise."—Oswestry.

"I am pleased to say my article was published in Monday's *Mail*. This is only the second article I have sent them."—Bandiway.

"I have rewritten according to your advice was accepted by the *Daily News*."—Liphook.

"The *Glasgow Evening Citizen* took my article which I did for Exercise Three. This makes two acceptances already since starting your course."—Swansea.

"I have had three acceptances this week—by the *Daily Chronicle*, *Daily Herald* and *Manchester Evening News*."—London.

"Two short story acceptances have resulted so far."—Co. Down.

"I have been taken on the staff of the *Daily Express*. I unhesitatingly attribute my ability to deliver the goods as a staff-man to your grounding in the fundamentals of popular journalism."—Paris.

"My article was accepted by the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* after being revised according to your criticisms. The original idea was only mooted after I had done Exercise II."—Durham.

"My MS. was taken by the *Manchester Evening News*. This article was actually the first thing I sent out under your tuition."—Hull.

"During the course I have made enough from my articles to pay all tuition fees and expenses and leave me with a clear profit of £9."—Hitchin.

"During the course I have had acceptances from the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Herald*, *Evening News*, *Star*, *John o' London* and T.P.'s and Cassell's *Weekly*."—Watford.

"Thank you for suggesting that I should send my article, which I sent with Lesson One, to the *Daily Graphic*. It was published."—Cambridge.

"I have had four humorous sketches taken for *Pearson's Weekly*. The Editor says if I can keep up the same standard they can take one every week from me."—Barkingside.

"The *Manchester Evening News* has accepted my article which I sent you with Exercise One."—London.

"*Pearson's Magazine* published a short story of mine. The cheque was for twenty guineas."—Rhyll.

"I have had half a dozen or more acceptances."—Bomabay.

"I have two more successes to record, in the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, and on the *Woman's Page* of the *Evening Standard*. That makes four acceptances before the Sixth Lesson is corrected."—London.

Many other letters omitted owing to lack of space.

PREMIER SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

Founded and Personally conducted by MR. GORDON MEGGY

Separate courses are conducted in SHORT STORY WRITING and ARTICLE WRITING by Correspondence. Oral tuition is also given by the Principal, either privately or in classes.

The teaching of the School is on practical lines throughout. Every detail that should be known to the new writer is covered either in the lessons or in the Principal's letters. Many of the exercises set take the shape of actual efforts at contribution—a feature that has helped pupils to sell thousands of MSS. during instruction.

It is the aim of the School to lay sound foundations that will enable pupils to make of their writing a permanent source of income.

Full details will be sent on application to the Librarian, Premier School of Journalism, 4 and 5, Adam Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. 2.

NEARLY EVERYONE CAN WRITE WELL ENOUGH TO GET INTO PRINT

HEALTHY BOVRIL

Presiding at the twenty-ninth annual general meeting of Bovril, Limited, Sir George Lawson Johnston (chairman) congratulated the shareholders on having had another successful year.

With their permission, he would take the report as read, and then proceed to deal with some of the more important changes in the accounts that had occurred during the last year.

Turning to the debtor side of the balance-sheet, they would find the alterations in the capital consequent on the share issues made during 1925. Of the 6 per cent. preference, there are now one million one pound shares, as against 750,000; the 7½ per cent. ordinary shares still stand at one million, but there are now one million deferred shares of £1 each, in place of 750,000 in the previous balance-sheet.

PREMIUM ON NEW ISSUE

They would remember, that the 250,000 additional preference shares were offered to the preference holders and to the ordinary holders at par; whilst the 250,000 deferred shares were offered, one for every holding of three, to the deferred shareholders at 30s. per £1 share. As the deferred shares stood well over 40s., this offer carried a considerable bonus, and the great majority of the shares were taken up direct, and paid for by the shareholders. In some cases, however, they sold their rights, and in a small number of instances, they did not pay any attention to the matter. No doubt this last only happened in the case of those who had rights on a few shares only. However, the company sold the rights on the shares not taken up for £10.491 14s., and this profit was added to the amount produced by the 10s. per share premium, which they would note was a new item on this side of the balance-sheet, and stood at £135,491 14s.

BOVRIL SLOGANS

To give another record, he believed more Bovril "slogans" were manufactured during 1925 than during any previous ten years. One newspaper had an interesting article on the hearty note in Bovril advertising, and referred to their topical posters on the London buses, for instance—

"Bovril will carry you further than the bus,"
"With Bovril inside you can sit outside,"
"Thank Bovril for goodness,"
"Add Bovril to your midday fare."

—and mentioned that some of the more picturesque Bovrilisms were passing into history, such as "Alas, my poor brother."

At the conclusion of the meeting the chairman made presentations to some twenty members of the staff who had been with the company since its formation in 1896.



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Coal and Commonsense

THE Miners' Federation and the General Council of the T.U.C. (33, Eccleston Square, S.W.1) have published in pamphlet form Labour's proposals to the Coal Commission, under the title *Coal and Commonsense*. Price 2d., post free 2½d.; 12 copies 1s. 8d., and 100 copies 12s. 6d. post free. The T.U.C. has also published *Miners' Wages Protected*, with a Foreword by Herbert Smith, President of the Miners' Federation. Price 2d., post free, 2½d.

Health Insurance: A Stocktaking

by Alban Gordon

AFTER nearly fourteen years the result of the first general stocktaking of National Health Insurance is now available in the Report of the Royal Commission published last Monday. The Commission was appointed in the summer of 1924 by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Government as the outcome of the terms of settlement in the three-cornered dispute between the Ministry of Health, the panel doctors, and the Approved Societies. That settlement—roughly the maintenance of the status quo—was to last for three years, and in the meantime a Royal Commission was to report on the whole field of Health Insurance policy, administration and finance.

When the first announcement of the intention to appoint a Commission was made there was much wire-pulling. All the different interests affected claimed direct representation, but in the end it was decided to appoint a non-representative impartial Commission. It is no secret that Mr. Wheatley and Mr. Clynes had an unusually difficult task in getting together a body of persons both willing and qualified to undertake the thankless and delicate task of sailing the treacherous waters of Health Insurance, and it is useless to pretend that the constitution of the Commission as finally determined was ideal.

BUT it was not only on the personal side that the Commission proved unlucky. In view of the growing importance of other branches of what has now come to be known as Social Insurance, and the vital necessity of co-ordinating all these different branches as far as may be, strong efforts were made to get the terms of reference of the new Commission made sufficiently wide to allow of a comprehensive survey of the whole field. For some reason, however—all the more inexplicable because a Labour Government was in office—it was decided to narrow the range of the inquiry to Health Insurance alone. Possibly there was an idea of initiating a co-ordinating inquiry later on.

Scarcely had the Commission started its work when an election and a change of Government supervened, and before the Commission had got into its stride the whole basis of Health Insurance was profoundly altered by the Contributory Pensions Act of 1925, which to a large extent cut the ground from beneath their feet, for it prejudged the method of administration of a new Insurance benefit closely allied to Health Insurance.

Another blow to the Commission which I cannot refrain from referring to was the loss of poor Fred Bramley, who, had he lived, would undoubtedly have been one of the signatories to the Minority Report.

Under the circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the Majority Report is a barren document, a monument of wasted opportunities. Oppressed by the double weight of vested interests and the revived "anti-waste" stunt, the Majority have evolved the most tepid document imaginable. Were it not for the brilliance of its draftsmanship (for which its secretary, Mr. Hackforth, has at last received some of the thanks due to him for years of fine work in the Insurance service), the Majority Report would be a miracle of mediocrity. "No change" is its keynote. Approved Society system—as you were. Rate of contributions—as you were. Benefits—as you were, save for a little tinkering. The only change of any magnitude proposed was a foregone conclusion—the abolition of Insurance Committees and the transfer of their functions to the Local Authorities.

BY a most amusing financial *volte-face* the Chief Government Actuary, Sir Alfred Watson, who has repeatedly stated or implied that not another penny was to be found in the coffers of National Insurance, has now discovered that by a little manipulation of figures the sum of 7s. per year for each insured man and 3s. 9d. for each woman is or can be made available.

The first call on this, to the tune of 3s. a year, is for the doctors, to maintain their panel fees at the present rates when the special subsidy expires at the end of this year. As regards the balance, this may be used—though the

majority seem a little doubtful when—to increase the statutory benefits. The form which these increases are to take is a great surprise to those who have followed the evidence before the Commission. Dentistry, which everybody assumed would take first place, is no higher in priority than fourth on the list, the first three being: (a) Extended scope of medical benefit (i.e., wider range of services); (b) Extra sickness benefit of 2s. a week for each dependent of an insured person; (c) Improved provision for women in pregnancy and childbirth.

The recommendation not to make dentistry a statutory benefit is simply amazing, especially as the Commission say that they realise "the value to health of . . . dental treatment and the need for making it generally available." More ill health is due to bad teeth than to any other form of neglect, and the expenditure on a general dental service under the Insurance Act would be repaid tenfold within twenty years. Recognising the storm of dissent that their failure to recommend this benefit will undoubtedly stir up, the majority apologise in advance, saying that their difficulty is "mainly the question of cost." Yet they themselves point out that 10,700,000 out of the 15 million insured persons are now getting the benefit in some form or another, while the accumulated surplus of National Insurance now amounts to between 40 and 45 millions sterling! Lack of statesmanship could go no farther.

THE pusillanimous recommendations of the majority are in marked contrast with the clarity with which they—or their Secretary—sum up the nature of the problems to be faced. On the vast subject of a Public Medical Service they recognise the case made, among others, by the present writer* for merging all our existing medley of medical services in one great organised public service. They say:

This large volume of representative evidence leads us to the general conclusions that whatever may be the changes . . . in Insurance in the near future, the trend will be towards a unified health service. . . . The ultimate solution will lie, we think, in the direction of divorcing the medical service entirely from the Insurance system and reorganising it along with all the other public health activities as a service to be supported from the general public funds.

(Continued at foot of next column.)

*In *Social Insurance*. (Geo. Allen & Unwin).

The Londoner's Chariot and other poems

BY WILFRID THORLEY

'He makes his characters picturesque not by romantic over-emphasis, but by respecting their reality; and while the words which he puts into their mouths have passed through the refining fire of an artist's technique, they preserve much of the vital and colloquial quality and of the primitive lilt appropriate to unsophisticated men.' *Times Literary Supplement*.

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Liberal Land Conference

To the Editor of the NEW LEADER.

YOUR articles and criticisms are so interesting that it is unfortunate that they are marred by inaccuracy of statement. I do not write to fill up your space with any reply to your grotesque caricature of the Liberal Land policy unless you desire me to do so. You say that the Liberal Land Convention was "skillfully packed," that expenses were paid from a central fund, and that "the provision of a gratuitous lunch apparently created the right sort of majority."

All these statements are untrue. The Conference was summoned by the National Liberal Federation, whose branches in the country elected the delegates in the same manner as I suppose delegates are selected for the Independent Labour Party or Trade Union conferences. It was called definitely to consider resolutions on their merits, without any suggestion from the N.L.F. Executive whether they approved of these or no. Neither the Land Committee, nor the Land and Nation League, nor the Candidates' Association, nor Mr. Lloyd George, nor Mr. Runciman, nor Sir Alfred Mond, had anything to do with the selection of the delegates. *The only expenses paid from the Central fund were a small grant made towards local organisation to enable the attendance of poor men and land workers* (the italics are ours. Ed., N.L.), who otherwise would not have been able to be present. No condition whatever was made as to the views of these or other delegates. Gratuitous lunches existed only in the imaginations of persons who desire to minimise the importance of this great gathering.

All these facts could have been found out by yourself had you cared to inquire from anyone who knew, instead of repeating idle gossip. I know that I can rely on your customary fairness to insert this correction of these untruths.

CHARLES F. G. MASTERMAN.

[We would refer Mr. Masterman to a letter in the *Times* of February 23, from Lord Trevelyan, a former Liberal M.P., who sat on the platform of the Liberal Land Conference. He writes: "Delegates . . . will always be delegates, and will be always liable to be stampeded, especially about luncheon time, and when they have been carefully selected according to the most approved methods of 'organised democracy.'" Again, "they threw the sitting tenant overboard . . . and adjourned to the luncheon thoughtfully provided for them." Could we suppose that "idle gossip" emanated from such a quarter?—Ed., N.L.]

(Continued from previous page)

After this perfectly true statement of the case there comes this anti-climax:

These, however, are problems which need not be solved now.

It is not unfair to say that these last few words sum up the whole tenor of the Majority Report. The Approved Society system, which the Minority rightly condemn as "a hindrance to the development of a complete public health policy," is glossed over by the comment: "This question might have to be reconsidered in the event of fundamental changes being made in the system of social insurance."

AS a striking contrast to the Majority Report, with its total evasion of the broader issues and its mass of recommendations on minor points, the Minority Report takes its stand boldly on the big issues of public health.

It declares for the supersession of the undemocratic Approved Societies by Local Authorities, and by the provision of a complete medical and treatment service, locally administered, and rate-aided. Dental treatment should at once be given, and sickness benefit increased to a minimum of 18s. a week for men and 15s. for women. Medical service during pregnancy and confinement should be linked up with the Maternity and Child Welfare services of the Local Authorities.

Limitations of space forbid full consideration of these proposals. Meanwhile history has repeated itself, and, as in the case of the Poor Law Commission of 1909, a Minority Report will once again afford a rallying ground for those who stand for the big elementary principles of public welfare.

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BERI BERI (Multiple Neuritis) a terrible Eastern Disease chiefly affecting the Nerves from which the Natives, whose chief diet is rice, have suffered, has been proved to be on account of an outer coating of the rice containing certain **Organic Salts** having been removed by a polishing process.

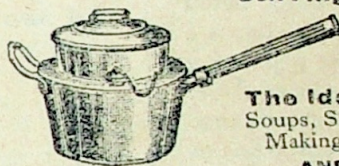
Dr. FORBES ROSS in his book entitled: *Cancer, the Problem of its Genesis and Treatment*, maintained and produced evidence that appeared to be indisputable, that the chief cause of Cancer was owing to a **Deficiency of Potassium in the System**.

Dr. ROBERT BELL, the *Eminent Cancer Specialist*, with reiterated emphasis wrote: "**Cancer is a Blood Disease and its Breeding Ground is the Colon.**" This is endorsed by an **EMINENT DOCTOR**, *Consulting Surgeon to one of the Leading Hospitals*, who publicly declared that there was **no secret** about Cancer, the seeds were sown in childhood and the terrible disease sprang almost invariably from **Constipation**.

CONSTIPATION causes Rheumatism, &c., and Rheumatism precedes Cancer. There is **only One Way to Cure Constipation, &c., and to PREVENT Cancer** and that is by using **Natural Remedies**—the Organic Salts derived from the Vegetable Kingdom, and from other Articles of Food composing the Daily Diet. Vegetables such as Spinach, Cabbage, Lettuce, are the richest in these Salts, while a fair supply can be obtained from Fruit, Nuts, Milk, Whole Wheat, &c., but not from White Flour. Though called the "**Staff of Life**," it is almost destitute of these Organic Salts as you can see by consulting the **Food Chart, which we supply Post Free**.

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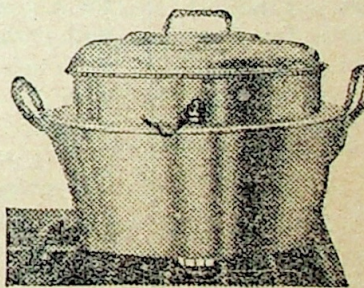
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The New Leader

H. N. Brailsford
Editor



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Locarno and the League

WE have been watching this week a working model of democracy. It might be rash to say that there is not a single inhabitant of our island who shares Sir Austen Chamberlain's view of the right policy to follow in the League. But up to the moment of writing that eccentric person, if he exists, has not ventured to express himself in public. For once there is in the Press, and amid all parties in the House, unbroken unanimity. And yet it is still doubtful whether it is the opinion of Sir Austen or the opinion of the forty millions which will find expression at Geneva. That this doubt is possible is a reflection, first of all on the Foreign Secretary, and then on Mr. Baldwin, but in the last resort it involves a shattering criticism of Parliament itself. On a question which affects the whole future of the League of Nations and the peace of Europe, it seems to be possible, under our representative institutions, that one clumsy and obstinate Minister, because he has the Whips behind him, may defy the settled opinion of his six hundred colleagues. It is an incident which should revive the demand for the creation in the House of a Standing Foreign Affairs Committee.

THE main point at issue is obvious to every man who cares for honest dealing. Every one knew why Germany stipulated that when she entered the League she should have a permanent seat on its Council. Her entry ends the ostracism of seven bitter years, but it is no less vital to her that she should recover her former status as a Great Power, to which her history, her culture, and her population entitle her. To admit Poland, Spain, and Brazil, or any one of them, to the same dignity at the same time is to destroy the significance of the recognition accorded to her. To our thinking it is wise to adhere to the arrangement which reserved these permanent seats to the Great Powers. If one steps outside this limited class there will be endless jealousies and disputes.

And unfortunately Mussolini, with his usual crudity, and the official French Press, with slightly more subtlety, have made it abundantly clear why these particular additions are desired. They call for a "Latin-Slav bloc" against "the German menace." As one listens to such language, one almost despairs of the League.

We were sceptical from the first of the "Locarno spirit." The French Chamber, after a most distressing Debate, has just ratified the Treaty, as M. Briand himself said, in a mood that is far from elation. Was it an effort to reconcile Germany and bring her back into the family of nations? Or was it merely a manoeuvre to detach her from Russia and to isolate Moscow? An honest reconciliation it clearly was not. If it was a manoeuvre, it has been managed with unique stupidity.

FRANCE, it is obvious, desires to place Poland permanently on the Council in order to pack the jury in her own favour. If she were engaged in a dispute with Germany, neither of them could vote; but her ally, Poland, could be trusted to watch over her interests, while Germany would have no backer. Nor is there more to be said for the claims of Spain, whom Sir Austen Chamberlain specially favours. Neither in culture nor in population is she a Great Power. Her politics are those of her military dictator. It is not true that the Latin-American Republics regard her as their national representative. One can only guess that the Foreign Office is anxious to repay the services which her adroit representative, Señor Quinones, rendered in the Iraq disputes.

There is only one straightforward course to follow, and that is to make no changes in the Council until Germany has taken her seat upon it. The same reasoning, one may add, should forbid the settlement of questions vital to her, notably the administration of the Saar territory, until she has taken her seat. Next September, when elections are normally held, is soon enough to discuss whether there is a case for appointing one or two additional temporary members. A real effort is being made by the German and Polish Socialists to improve the relations of their two countries. It is worth while to consider, as the German Socialists generously suggest, whether Poland should then be elected as a non-permanent member.

WE should like, while all our thoughts are busy with the League and its Council, to make on our own account a suggestion which may be worth examination. Much of this trouble arises, to our thinking, from the composition of the Council itself. It performs two distinct functions. It often has to act in a quasi-judicial capacity. It may also be required to organise measures of pressure or coercion. There are good reasons, when active measures are required, why the League's Executive should consist of the spokesmen of Governments, and particularly of the Great Powers. It is Governments alone which can act against an aggressive or recalcitrant State. This Council, again, may be the proper body to consider disarmament. One cannot as yet in such matters go behind national Governments.

But is a Council of Governments the proper body to adjudicate disputes? One might be able to find a distinguished Spaniard who would give his voice according to his conscience in such a matter as the Mosul dispute. But if the Spanish member is a professional diplomatist, whose first duty is to his employers in Madrid, can he forget the possibility that the British Foreign Office may reward his country if he gives the verdict it desires? A Czech and even a Latin-American statesman will be in the same position. His country must look to Paris for arms or for loans. A Council so composed is a mockery of impartial justice.

The remedy would seem to be to create a Standing Council of Conciliation, side by side with the League's Executive. It should be composed of men who are neither Ministers nor Ambassadors, chosen without regard to nationality. So long as the League is dominated by Governments, so long as it entrusts all its work to men trained to consider only the interests of the national State which appoints them, it will never evolve a sense for the general good. It will remain what it is to-day, a focus for the intrigues of armed Governments, each pursuing by barter and compromise the narrow end of national aggrandisement. An Executive of Governments it must have. But side by side with it, let the Assembly elect, from free men of known character, a Standing Council of Conciliation.

A Ministry of Defence

PARLIAMENT has discussed this week the estimates for the Air Force, and the Naval estimates have been published. The familiar questions have all been asked, and—left unanswered. It appears that in the air we are arming rather slowly, with the purpose of equalling one day the equipment of our former ally France. On account of the "Locarno spirit" the pace of our counter-preparations has been slowed down, but it was intimated that its effect can only be temporary. There are appreciable economies in the Naval estimates. Seven years after the sinking of the German fleet the Admiralty has realised that it can dispense with its base at Rosyth. But new building goes on faster than ever.

There is a growing school of thought which mixes intelligence with its militarism, which urges that the proportions in our expenditure on the three services are grossly mistaken. It would spend much more on the Air Force, and very much less on the Navy. It suspects that the social prestige of the fleet, the traditional appetite for sea-power, and, one may add, the pressure of the armament interests, are causing us to squander our millions on capital ships which have lost their fighting value under modern conditions. It urges that defence should be considered as a single function, that the three independent Ministries be abolished, and a single Minister for Defence entrusted with the general responsibility.

FOR reasons of our own we warmly agree, and hope that the next Labour Government will have the courage to put one of its best men in this position. It is just conceivable that from him we might get an answer to the question why we maintain a great fleet at all in a world where no Maritime Power appears to threaten us. The usual answer is that we may have to fight Japan for our China trade. If that answer ever was true, it is now out of date. For Sir Austen Chamberlain has destroyed our China trade.

There is, we believe, a much simpler answer. Why did America build a fleet equal to our own? She built it, of course, taught by the humiliations of the Great War, in order to protect her own neutral commerce from the severities of a future British blockade. And we in turn require our fleet primarily to enforce, against America, our doctrine of blockade. Is it adequate for that purpose? And if it is not adequate for that purpose, is it of any use at all? The road to economy and disarmament is through a reconsideration of the Freedom of the Seas.

The Tragic Shipwrights of War

Colonel House Learns the Craft

by H. N. Brailsford

MR LOWES DICKINSON, in the impressive volume of reasoned history which he has just written*, records his judgment of the monarchs and statesmen who made the Great War. The chief impression left on his mind, after years of close study, is not their wickedness, but their smallness.

What little puppets, knocking away with Lilliputian hammers the last stays that restrained the launch of that great death-ship, War!

Through this dockyard, inspecting the ship, chatting intimately with the carpenters, there wandered a shrewd American traveller, whose record of his adventures among these tragic shipwrights is published to-day†. In the end Colonel House learned the craft himself, and swung his hammer with the rest.

Among all the personalities whom the War has made memorable, there is no figure more interesting and original. Throughout his career he sought nothing for himself, and never held even the least considerable office. And yet one cannot doubt that during eight of the most formative years in American history he was the inspirer, the architect, and often the actual executive hand of American policy. Women have sometimes played this part behind the scenes; occasionally a tutor has guided a young Emperor in this way. But is there in the history of democracies another instance of a man who was neither minister, deputy, ambassador, nor civil servant, and yet contrived, solely by his personal influence, to guide a great nation and lead it far from its familiar moorings?

HOUSE learned the art of directing politics without publicity or responsibility, first of all in his native Texas. His sole concern was to get things done, and if he could achieve his end in silence and without the knowledge of Press or public, he was the better pleased. To him from the first Mr. Wilson looked for the definition of his foreign policy. Even after the World War had begun, down even to the eve of America's entry into it, Mr. Wilson remained absorbed in home affairs. House thought for him, negotiated for him, sketched his despatches, and supplied the ideas of his speeches. Little, indeed, was Wilson's, save the eloquent words, the strongly-modelled sentences, and the occasional indiscretions. That House kept his ascendancy for so many years over this proud, lonely man, touched as he was at the end with megalomania, and deaf, as few autocrats have been, to advice and the hum of popular opinion, is one of the most singular achievements in history.

House had a way of impressing his personality by some unconscious magic on those with whom he talked. He seemed curiously modest. He talked very simply. One felt (if I may judge from one short conversation with him) his courtesy and his sincerity. His shrewdness, I think, he had learned to conceal. He could play the courtier, as one gathers from a clever letter in this book to the Kaiser, couched in the inflated style which the All-Highest exacted from ordinary mortals. He seemed to me a sad and disillusioned man (it was after America's entry into the war), full of fore-

boding about the coming settlement; and yet, when he talked of democracy as the foundation of peace, one realised that this adroit and experienced man was, at bottom, a simple-minded idealist. His personal power lay in his complete disinterestedness.

THE earlier chapters of this big book, which Professor Seymour has edited from Colonel House's diaries and letters, have little more than a biographical interest. Here and there one catches a glimpse of American life, where old-world piety jostles with the dollar. One reads, for example, how President Eliot was held to be disqualified for membership of a political Commission which the administration was sending to China, because he was a Unitarian and not an orthodox Christian. Again, we find that two bankers, who wished to exert pressure on the Government over the details of its banking legislation, prepared the way by giving a large donation to the Y.M.C.A. The story starts in earnest with House's first constructive essay in foreign policy, the germ of all his later work. He sketched out a Pan-American Pact, which contained the essential features of the League of Nations. There was to be a guarantee of the territorial integrity and political independence: all disputes were to be referred to arbitration with a year's delay before war might break out. The export of armaments was prohibited, and stress was laid on the republican form of government—for House and Wilson always held that democracy was the necessary basis of peace.

BUT House was ready to go much beyond a Pan-American League. He was an internationalist, bent on breaking down the traditional isolation of the United States. He believed that his country had a duty to the rest of the world, and that it alone could play the mediator to a Europe drifting into war. He had big and sound ideas about the causes of European rivalries. For him Imperialism was the central fact, and he saw its economic roots. He undertook a journey to Europe in the spring of 1914 as Mr. Wilson's confidential agent, saw Sir Edward Grey and the Kaiser, and laid before them an outline of a peace plan. He wished to unite the great Imperial Powers, chiefly Britain, Germany and America (though he included Japan and France) in some kind of co-operative plan for "cleaning-up the waste places of the world." He thought of using armies, as the United States army had been used in Panama, for peaceful constructive work. He aimed at controlling the export of capital, so that "in the future usurious interest and concessions which involve the undoing of weak and debt-involved countries would no longer be countenanced." He saw that a peace must be found for German energy and work, either in Latin America, in Persia, or in Asia Minor. He believed that a reduction of armaments must necessarily follow. Ultimately he hoped that something like his Pan-American Pact might be set up on a world-wide basis. He found the British Government sympathetic, and on the Kaiser also he undoubtedly made an impression. Indeed, the Kaiser, after his fall, said that House's visit to Europe "almost prevented the world-war." But the initiative came too late. House returned to America appalled by the imminent danger of war.

WHEN the war came, House thought coolly of its origins. He did not believe that the Kaiser desired it, nor was he impressed by the British zeal for Belgium. Yet his sentiment, and that of Mr. Wilson also, was from the first with the Allies. He at once conceived and never abandoned the idea that America must be the mediator, and that her purpose must be to turn the settlement into a permanent plan for the prevention of war. Here for the first time we have the full story of his unflagging efforts to shorten the war and create a League of Nations. His chief lever was his intimate friendship with Sir Edward Grey. The two men trusted each other from the first, and kept up an active correspondence in cipher.

It would be tedious to recount in detail all House's anxious work in dealing with the severities and illegalities of the British blockade on the one hand, and with the inhumanities of submarine warfare on the other. Two facts stand out. At an early stage he succeeded in bringing the British Government to accept his proposal, that it would permit the export of food to the enemy in return for the abandonment of the submarine war on shipping and the use of poison gas. The German Government bluntly refused to accept the offer. The second fact is more startling. It was House and not the Germans who invented in its extreme form the proposal for the Freedom of the Seas. His idea was that all trade, save in actual weapons of war, should be absolutely free, even in war-time. He reckoned that if this idea were adopted, navies themselves would become superfluous. It seems almost incredible, and yet it is apparently the fact, that he did actually persuade the British Foreign Office that it was to our advantage to adopt this very radical solution. Under Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Balfour it recovered, of course, from this momentary fit of moderation, and in the settlement it rejected even the more workable form of the idea, that blockades should be permitted only in warlike operations conducted by the League against a Power which had refused to arbitrate.

This record of American protests against the methods of our blockade deserves to be read with care and attention. America's sense of her own impotence to check our arbitrary interference with her commerce had one permanent result, which remains, indeed, the one lasting consequence of her contact with Europe during the war. It forced her to increase her navy until it equalled ours.

HOUSE'S efforts to shorten the war by mediation can be described only in outline. His idea was that at the appropriate moment Mr. Wilson should invite the belligerents to a Peace Conference. He would outline a plan (afterwards embodied in the Covenant of the League) for the prevention of all future wars. He would require moderation from both sides in their territorial claims. He would then intervene as a belligerent against the group which refused peace on those lines.

It is no mystery why this plan failed. In the first place, America had no land army; the Germans did not fear, the Allies did not value, her military power. In the second place, the Germans very naturally refused to believe in the sincerity of her neutrality. Throughout the war her manufacturers

*The International Anarchy, 1904-1914. (G. Allen and Unwin, 17s. 6d.)

†The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, 2 vols. (Ernest Benn, £2 2s.)

The People's Claim to Beauty

Blind Councillors

by Henry W. Nevinson

I SET myself to write to-day on the "Requisition Pictures" now on view in the London County Hall, and it seemed an easy task. They are pictures chosen by the County Council for use in our Elementary Schools, and they may be "requisitioned" by the authorities of the Schools according to taste. Certainly they make an attractive show as they hang in two long galleries.

First we come upon beautiful and exact representations of animals and birds—the British animals and birds, with horses, deer, and also some wild animals in the Zoo. They are drawn with knowledge and sympathy—see, for instance, the picture of a squirrel carrying a young one to the nest—and I cannot imagine how any boy or girl brought up on such pictures can in after-life emulate our plutocrats and aristocracy in finding the principal delight in the slaughter of animals or birds by shooting or by chasing them to death. Next come faithful pictures of flowers and insects, and then Bible pictures, which, I was glad to find, are few. Not that I have any dislike of the Bible, outside the atrocious cruelty of some early bits of history; but because Bible pictures are nearly always bad, sentimental, and tedious.

Then come fine architectural pictures of old castles and cathedrals, beautiful enough to choke Americans with envy for want of such buildings; reproductions of the Great Masters, partly Italian, partly English; a lot of imaginative historical pictures, chiefly representing scenes of war; some very beautiful landscapes, French and English; and a long series of splendid portraits, mainly historical, but partly chosen for the beauty of the subject or the painter's skill.

EXCEPT for the Bible pictures and some of the battle scenes, which are too absurdly untrue, nearly all in the gallery are beautiful,

and one must think the children fortunate who are brought up among them. I noticed, however, that, though nearly all the reproductions were English, a few wretched American things had crept in, whereas examples from Berlin and Vienna, which are the most beautiful types of this art, are carefully excluded—have been excluded since 1914 in fact. It is surely time that they were restored. Beauty has nothing whatever to do with the international stupidity that sets one race killing another. Even at the Queen's Hall German music may now be heard.

Except for that silly old prejudice, it seemed easy to praise the show and the County Council that had collected and arranged it for distribution. But then I issued into a hideous London street, and I thought of other London streets with which I am familiar—in Homerton, Hoxton, Poplar, Stepney, Notting Dale, Southwark, Camberwell, Brixton, Paddington—in fact nearly all districts in the Empire's capital city.

AND I wondered what was the good of beautiful pictures while the surroundings of our ordinary life remained so hideous, so vulgar, and so monotonous. Would it not be better to wipe out all pictures from all houses and all schools if only we could gain just one beautiful street for the people to live in? I am convinced it would be better. Dearly as I love all the arts, and try seriously to understand and appreciate them, I would see them all disappear in exchange for one street that might serve as a model of architectural beauty for our enormous, wealthy, and hideous industrial cities, such as Wigan, Manchester, or Sheffield. Private beauty in rich homes may become a positive curse to a nation, and even such beauty as can now be implanted in our Council Schools cannot avail so long as our children are brought

up in the unbroken ugliness of our cities. To what, then, can the artist's genius be applied?

Thus wondering, I went my way till, in crossing Westminster Bridge, I looked down the river and saw Waterloo Bridge still standing. Then I remembered that the majority of the very County Council whose exhibition I had just been admiring had cheered with enthusiasm when the resolution for the destruction of Waterloo Bridge was carried. How could that be possible? Were the Councillors blind, or drunk, or mad? They seemed to favour the encouragement of beauty and of "good taste," yet they cheered the destruction of something far more beautiful and of far greater encouragement to "good taste" than all possible reproductions of all the pictures in their galleries put together. If such destruction were inevitable, they ought to have wept. They ought to have passed the resolution in mournful silence and asked the organist to play the Funeral March from the *Heroic Symphony* or from *Saul*. But they thought it a joyful occasion. They cheered. They revelled in the extinction of extraordinary beauty. They never felt so happy in their lives.

PROBABLY those County Councillors were incapable of perceiving beauty. It is not at all true that beauty possesses a universal appeal. That is what makes it so hard to define. It is not even like the camel, which is hard to define but you know it when you see it. Thousands of people could not see the beauty of the Epstein memorial in Hyde Park. Thousands, including myself, cannot see the beauty in the newest music; or in the newest *Ulysses*, which looks to us like the Telephone Directory soured in filth; or in other fashionable novels, which sound to us like the anæmic concupiscence of invalid swine.

Russian peasants told Maurice Baring that the translation of *Paradise Lost* gave them "a sweet feeling," but I doubt if English farm-labourers would say the same even of the original. I know a student of art who spent days trying to find the beauty in the 2,500 pictures of last autumn's Salon in Paris, quite in vain. "They all seem painted by the same man, and awkwardly painted," he said; yet Paris boasts herself the home, sweet home of art. I could appreciate the delicate simplicity of the savage ochisangi (a twanging instrument) in Central Africa, and the terrifying solemnity of the ochingufu (an enormous drum wrought out of a hollow block of wood); but when in high fever, as my habit is, I sang bits of Beethoven and saw the natives laughing around me in a ring, I could not be sure they laughed in pure delight at hearing Beethoven for the first time.

THE sense for beauty is inborn, and it cannot be implanted. But when inborn, it can to some extent be educated into higher appreciation, and that service is, no doubt, what the County Councillors, having obviously missed both the inborn sense and its education themselves, wish to impart to such of the school-children as may be capable of it. Most of the posters along our railways and in the stations are disgusting in hideousness, but there appear to be people in control of the Tubes who aim at conferring a similar benefit, for a few of the posters there are of eminent beauty. It may be that by such means some future generation of the English may yet reach an unfulfilling sense for beauty such as was evidently reached by the Chinese, and even by the Japanese, before industrialism stifled it, and such as for about two centuries was the universal inheritance of the Athenians.

Professor Salvemini

Professor Salvemini will lecture on "What is Fascism?" at the Essex Hall, Strand, on Tuesday, March 23, at 8 p.m. Tickets (10s., 5s., and 1s.) from Mrs. Alys Russell, 11, St. Leonard's Terrace, S.W. 3.

Shipwrights of War (cont.)

and her bankers were coining money by making munitions and lending money for the benefit of the Allies, and of the Allies alone. But apart from these reasons, it is clear that neither side was ever ready for "peace without victory." House could win the enthusiastic assent of British statesmen to his League proposals, and even the Germans gave them their vague and possibly insincere approval. But when at last, at the end of January, 1917, the Germans did disclose their peace terms, they destroyed the last vestige of hope. They were a barely disguised scheme of annexations and indemnities, no worse, perhaps, than the Versailles scheme, but infinitely far from House's ideal.

The Allies, on the other hand, were never ready to admit that the moment for conference had come. The British Government would not even transmit the proposal to its allies. It always pointed to France as the obstacle, and the French did not conceal from House their reckoning that no chance so favourable for crushing Germany would ever occur again. But the fact is that while House was trying sedulously to bring the Allies to moderation, they were, unknown to him, drafting their peace of conquest and vengeance in the Secret Treaties.

HOUSE'S ideas of the settlement were somewhat elastic. He started with no annexations. He soon excepted Lorraine and then Alsace. He would give Russia a warm-water port: Poland might be independent, and Turkey might be broken up. But to the last he insisted that if Germany lost territory in Europe she must be compensated in other parts of the world. He evidently knew nothing of the bargains which gave Constantinople to Russia in March, 1915, and sanctioned the conquests of Italy in April of that year. By the middle of 1916, when his negotiations with London took final shape, the treaty with Roumania had settled the break-up of Austria-Hungary, and France had tabled her

claim to the Rhineland. The result was that on the eve of his entry into the war Mr. Wilson had become suspicious of Allied designs and was determined to maintain his neutrality. Even when he handed his passports to Count Bernstorff he believed that he could still avoid active belligerency. It was the Germans who forced him in, by the folly of their ruthless submarine war.

FROM this important book of documents one turns without surprise to Mr. Lowes Dickinson's searching analysis of the whole European anarchy, from 1904 to the outbreak of the war. He says again, with fuller knowledge and ampler material, what he has already said so powerfully in his shorter books. One can describe this book: one could hardly in less than a volume discuss it. It is a philosopher's survey of recent European history in the light of all the secret papers and memoirs which have appeared since the war. It is written by a great literary artist, whose outlook is one of fearless and candid impartiality. So far from stressing the case against the Allies, it seems to me to understate it. To give two examples: Mr. Dickinson barely mentions the evidence that the Serbian Government was privy to the Serajevo plot, and he has not used the most damaging of the revelations about Russia's general mobilisation, which emerged from the trial of General Sukhomlinoff. And yet he must satisfy every candid reader that the whole anarchic State system, and not German ambition alone, was the cause of a war which might as easily have happened over Morocco, Constantinople, or Bosnia. The book will become a classic for every serious student of the problems of peace. If one has a criticism, it is that the purely political and moral causes of war are more sharply stressed than the economic causes. The more a Socialist reflects on this chapter of world history, the less does one hope from any remedy short of the abolition of the profit-making motive and the decay of that nationalism which has its root in the interests of an exploiting class.

Of Gods and Ascetics

The Indian Legend of Sakuntala

by Stan Harding

THE peace of the South Indian dawn by the dry course of the Vagai River in the hot weather was the peace of a civilisation as leisurely as Genesis. The vast palm-bordered waste had a beauty of its own, and was one of my favourite resorts in the early morning hours. Viewed from the new Public Works Department bridge, it looked like a beautiful old map. Here and there water still flowed through pools and narrow channels, where the people had fashioned an image of the god, and had dug down to "Siva's Ganges" flowing beneath the sand.

In the morning and evening hours every pool had its worshippers, who stood praying and bathing and washing their cloths with due rites or renewing their caste marks beside it.

On the day of the Subrahmanya festival I was there soon after daybreak to put in an hour or so's sketching. I was not the only European on the river bank. Some early-risen Jesuit Fathers sat anxiously watching some bathers, probably their converts, and trying to decide whether their bath was really necessary and due to a legitimate desire for cleanliness, or whether it was not some idolatrous ritual of purification by water. For thousands of years Indian civilisation has regarded the bath as a religious exercise. The use of holy water by the Catholic Fathers gives them a distinct advantage over their Protestant rivals, for when, after preaching his religion to an assembly of Hindus, the Catholic priest sprinkles those present with holy water, they think, no doubt, of the Ganges, and feel duly sanctified. One of the principal difficulties of the Catholic Father is to prevent his convert from taking a religious view of his daily bath. No wonder the reverend Fathers looked worried as they sat by the river course. Siva Ganga flowing beneath the sand might carry their converts away.

I TOO, was watching some bathers, having caught sight of two Brahman acquaintances of mine, Sri Sivaswami and Sri Venkateswara, doing their morning puja, each at a little pool to himself. Sri Venkateswara was engaged in washing the two gold-bordered muslin scarves which in South India generally form the complete outfit of a Brahman. (Every Brahman with any pretension to caste observance must put on "pure scarves"—as scarves washed with due rites are called—at least once a day.)

Sri Sivaswami, as I could see from his gestures, was still at a very early stage of his prayers. He had only just finished thinking of the Ganges and begun thinking of the splendid light of the Sun, and asking the Sun to "dry up" any sins he might have committed during the night. At last he came to his final prayer, and held his newly-washed scarf over his head for a minute—quite long enough for the sun positively to iron it out.

WHEN my friends' puja was over, their sins all nicely dried up, their caste marks on their foreheads, chests, and arms, and their "pure scarves" wound round them, they came up the river bank. Sivaswami recognised me, and came toward me, stopping on his way to speak to a sacred tree and to walk round it seven times. "What did you say to the tree?" I asked him. "I merely said, 'You are a god, O Tree.'" "Would it be right for me to say that to a tree?" "Certainly, if it was a god."

Just then some young men passed by, carrying huge brass vessels full of milk on their heads, and reeling as if drunk. It appeared that they had taken vows, and must carry the milk without spilling a drop right across the plain to Tiruparankundrum, where there is one of those great rocks that rise abruptly some thousand feet or so from the South Indian plain, and whose base is usually warrened with temples. The three of us took a bullock-cart and followed the devotees. Although it was not yet eight, the heat was intense, even in the low semi-circular shelter of our cart—an oasis of shade travelling across the deadly glare of the plain.

Elephants carrying musicians and dancers swung along the same road. From the howdahs of the elephants and from the distant rock temples came the sound of drums. "Siva in His sound form," said my companions. It seemed as if the whole sky were throbbing with this vibrating movement.

One of the musicians mounted on an elephant was tapping a little drum with a small dry tone (which could be heard at a surprising distance)—a small dry tone, dryer than anything in Europe (unless it be Voltaire's wit), dry as the parched plain and perfectly marvellous to dance to.

AT last we arrived at the temple and sat outside under a pandal watching the arrival of the votaries. As each young man reached the shrine there was a wild burst of music from conch and drone and drums and long silver trumpets.

The plain shimmered in the midday heat, and it seemed best to wait till after sundown before returning. For to South India the noonday sun

is Siva the Destroyer, at whose glance the hair of the Demons turned the pale colour of munga grass. I was unwilling to inconvenience a Brahman household, which possibly kept strict caste, by accepting its proffered hospitality. (They might not have been convinced by Sivaswami's surprising description of me as an "Aryan from Italy of Brahman descent," and, alas! I still eat "the innocent cow.") So I insisted on spending the afternoon in the shade of a lonely little temple near the summit of the rock, and there my acquaintances rejoined me after their sunset puja. They said it would be best not to go down till the religious fervour of the multitude had abated. Brahman women would wait till the fervour was less. Besides, they themselves were both dressed in muslin, which is held to be more susceptible than silk to contamination.

It was the light fortnight. We decided to wait. "Shall I tell you the stories of the holy ascetics?" suggested one of my companions. "Please do."

(Continued on next page)



Sakuntala Takes Leave of the Forest

From a pen drawing by Mukul Dey



Sakuntala Takes Leave of the Forest

From a pen drawing by Mukul Dey

"A MAN'S reputation is like his shadow, which sometimes follows, sometimes precedes him and which is occasionally longer and occasionally shorter than he is"



A Pipe of PLAYER'S NAVY CUT

takes the shadows out of life
and lightens the daily round

For the Cigarette Smoker
PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES

P.1145

Of Gods and Ascetics (cont.)

AND so I listened without growing weary to the variations of the great theme: the struggle of the ascetics for power by the might of penance and of the gods to check their austerity and so preserve the balance of power. India has always held that concentration and extreme austerity give the ascetic tremendous power, which he may use to free himself from re-birth or for any purpose whatever. By "the might of penance" he has accumulated credit with the latent force of the universe; he has a blank cheque on that force and may draw it as he will. The gods are averse to the acquisition of such awful power by the ascetics and so are apt to beset them with temptations.

This is what happened in the case of the great ascetic Kaucika, who was a menace to the gods. Quite in accordance with their usual practice, they sent him a beautiful maiden of heavenly origin, whose task it was to diminish the austerity of the sage and so check his growing power. In due course she bore him a daughter, the lovely Sakuntala, round whose story the great Indian poet Kalidasa has written his most beautiful play.

HERE is a bare outline of the story. Sakuntala, left by her father to the care of his fellow ascetic Kanva, grows up in the forest hermitage, where Mr. Mukul Dey's drawing shows her. Kalidasa gives an unforgettable picture of the hermitage where the sage lives, "having laid aside the rod against all living creatures and not hurting any of them." The trees and flowers are well watered. The animals are free from fear. In these surroundings she is found by the young king Dushanta. When hunting the gazelle near the hermitage one day he is arrested by the cry of a forest ascetic: "Commit no murder," and unbends his bow, and in return receives the blessing of the ascetic, who wishes him a son fitted by virtue for the *raj* of the world. He visits the hermitage and Sakuntala dispenses to him the hospitality of the forest. They fall deeply in love. He weds her, then leaves the forest to return to his court, promising to send for his wife in a few days.

But sorrow arrives. Sakuntala sits dreaming of her lover, unconscious of herself, and of others; so it happens that she neglects to offer due rites to a passing ascetic. He is incensed and speaks a curse: *The man of whom she is thinking shall forget her.* One of the forest maidens overhears him and begs his forgiveness for her friend. He relents a little. All may be well in the end, but first his word must be fulfilled.

Things begin to go wrong at once for Sakuntala; the curse of the wandering ascetic is upon her. King Dushanta forgets to send for her. Then she loses the signet ring he has

given her. Finally, when she journeys to the court, he cannot remember meeting her at all, and publicly disowns her.

Years pass. The signet ring is found and brought to the king. His memory, lost through the ascetic's curse, now comes back, and he sickens with remorse and anguish at the thought of the unmerited insult he has offered his young wife. In the end—for had not the ascetic relented a little?—the king finds Sakuntala, who is now the mother of a son "fitted by virtue for the *raj* of the world." For the blessings of the ascetics must be fulfilled as surely as their curses. And now mark: In the supreme happiness of reunion with his beloved, the king prays for freedom from re-birth.

THE whole play, it will be seen, is set to the well-known Indian rhythm of the blessing and the curse of the wandering ascetic. And if I read it here in England I feel again the vibrations of the Sivite drums, and am sitting near the summit of the great boulder with my Hindu companions listening to the epic story of the struggle of the ascetics to steal the latent force of the universe by the might of penance, and of the gods to thwart them.

One is puzzled by the contrast in the conception of the gentle ascetic, living in the forest, courteous to passing strangers, to trees and animals, and that of perhaps the very same ascetic when he has attained to awful power by "the might of penance." Then he is apt to use it unscrupulously, and may blast by a word the life of some innocent person like Sakuntala. Who is to be trusted with power? One sympathises with the gods who try to prevent its acquisition by the ascetics, though their method is surely objectionable and savours too much of politics. There it is: when power—its possession or the struggle to attain it—is concerned, neither gods nor holy ascetics are seen at their best.

It seems strange that the great ascetics should be taken in so often by the old confidence trick of the fair penitent or pilgrim who visits them in their retreat, and who begins with the customary questions: "Is the practice of austerities on the increase?" "And have you plentiful store of roots and fruits?" The explanation given me was that they were too sure of themselves. And perhaps the great moral lesson of these legends—if they have one—is that it does not do to be too sure of anything.

After a while we sat silent. It was the light fortnight, and the plain lay white in the moonlight. There was no sound but the throbbing of the drums from somewhere within the rock. The multitude had faded away. The religious fervour had abated.

Simplified Spelling

To the Editor of the NEW LEADER.

YOU suggest that the teaching of Simplified Spelling would cause difficulty in regard to existing printed books. My daughter, aged 11, reads everything, from *Vanity Fair* to *The Call of the Wild*, though she learnt to read and write in simplified spelling; the transition was made without the slightest difficulty.

You suggest also that an irrational spelling has a historical value. "Etymological" value would have been a better description, and, even so, a good deal of the etymology suggested by orthodox spelling is false.

How often have you met workers with good brains, and often with expressive tongues, who have been deprived of half their usefulness to themselves and the world because they cannot write easily? The irrational spelling of English very often means that a man or woman has to devote so much labour and thought to the problem of *how* to write that the far more important task of deciding *what* to write is rendered impossible of achievement. An entirely unjustified "inferiority complex" is established and real intelligence is dammed up.

R. J. P. MORTISHED.

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY ISSUE

MARCH 7, 1926

Sunday Worker

Owned and Controlled by the Rank and File

To mark the completion of our first twelve months we are producing a special 16 page issue, which will be the kind of paper we should like to produce every week. We can make the bigger, better paper permanent if YOU will help us to realise our 1926 slogan—

"200,000 Readers—Every Reader a Shareholder"

ORDER FROM YOUR NEWSAGENT TO-DAY

SIXTEEN PAGES FOR TWOPENCE

Books with Brevity

Mr. Stacey Hyde as Novelist

READERS of the NEW LEADER are familiar with Mr. Stacey Hyde as a story-teller, and will welcome a novel from his pen. *Simple Annals* (Noel Douglas. 7s. 6d.) has the qualities which his short stories lead us to expect: he has sympathetic insight into character, and he knows the life of the industrial workers as few writers can do. His hero, Vivian, is as much alive to us as our own work-mates in factory or office; his early, crude efforts to "better himself," his unlovely yet pathetic assertiveness, his wholly unsuccessful fibbing, are portrayed with such skill that the boy never loses our sympathy.

But unhappily in the novel, unlike the short story, convention demands a love interest; and Mr. Hyde's love story is far less convincing than his tale of an ambitious boy struggling in the dark for knowledge and freedom. Vivian is the work of the craftsman, Nora of the machine. Nor can we readily resign ourselves to the aggressively ugly slang which, it seems, is the only language known to Mr. Hyde's women characters.

We beg Mr. Hyde to defy convention; he can dare to go his own way, to write what he can write with conviction, and leave the conventional requirements of the machine-made novel to the mass producer of fiction. He himself is, and must remain, a skilled craftsman.

M. M. G.

Timotheus. The Future of the Theatre. By Bonamy Dobrée. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d.)

With the help of Mr. Wells's Time Machine, Mr. Dobrée was projected into the year 2,100. The present book is a single chapter—written from memory—of a great future work on his experiences. It is a witty and brilliant satire on modern fads or modern tendencies—call them which you will—psychological and theatrical.

What Makes Revolution?

To the Editor of the NEW LEADER.

WRITING on Voltaire, C. E. M. Joad, propounds the oft debated query:—"Do ideas and aspirations bring revolution, or are revolutions the inevitable outcome of circumstances?" "What you will think about this particular question," he writes, "will depend upon what you already think about the materialist conception of history. I, who believe that minds do influence events instead of merely reflecting them, cordially dislike the materialist conception of history. . . ." etc.

Let me ask first if by "the materialist conception of history" C. E. M. Joad means the Marxian conception usually denoted by that term? If so, Mr. Joad has completely mistaken the crucial point in that conception. There is nothing whatever in Marx's conception to justify the assertion that "minds" do not influence events and very much to show why and how they do.

A pertinent answer to Mr. Joad's question could be given by two quotations:—

"Man works at history—but he does not make it out of the whole piece."—MARX, *Eighteenth Brumaire*.

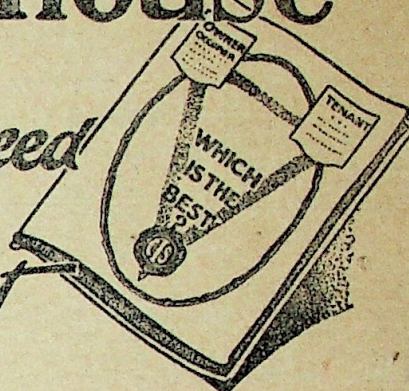
"In considering such [Epochs of Revolution] we must always distinguish clearly between the change in the industrial methods of social production, on the one hand—(a change which takes place unconsciously, strictly according to the laws of natural science, and might properly be called an *Evolution*)—and, on the other hand, the change in the legal, political, religious, artistic, or philosophical—in short, *ideological*—institutions. With regard to these, men fight out this conflict as a revolution conscious of their opposing interests." (From the introduction to Marx's *Critique of Political Economy*).

In fact, if Mr. Joad will look at it again he will see that his first question does not present an alternative at all. Ideas are among the "circumstances" that make a revolution inevitable.

THOS. A. JACKSON.

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This Booklet describes in a simple and straightforward manner the C.I.S. House Purchase Scheme—a practical plan for helping practical people to acquire houses of their own. You will be interested in this Booklet No. D.5! Why not get a copy now?

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The I.L.P. for Unity!

A United International

The following is the substance of a resolution put forward by the I.L.P. for the next meeting of the Labour and Socialist International Executive:

THAT, in view of the urgent need of working-class solidarity against Capitalist and Imperialist Reaction and the menace of Fascism in Europe, the Executive of the Labour and Socialist International should suggest a joint conference to the Executive of the Third International with the object of exploiting the possibilities of the formation of an all-inclusive International.

* * *

THE Communist Party of Russia has repeatedly shown its readiness to modify its policy in accordance with changed circumstances, e.g., N.E.P. The "realism" of the Communist Party should face the changed circumstances and recognise that "armed revolution" is not the "inevitable" method. Tomsky's recent speech on Trade Union unity shows a modification in attitude on the Industrial side of the International. Zinovieff and the extremist leaders of the Third International have recently lost influence in Russia. Communists in many European countries show an increasing tendency to concentrate upon immediate issues, instead of the "armed revolution." British Communists have recently indicated that their conception of "armed revolution" is not a minority armed rising, but action by a Socialist Government to suppress any resistance by the possessing classes. Action on behalf of the Socialist prisoners in Russia and in support of political freedom there is likely to be more successful through consultation than by criticism hurled across division.

* * *

IT is desirable that the conference should be unconditional, but disputed points of principle might be raised by the L.S.I.

The L.S.I. should urge that the basis of the formation of an all-inclusive International should be freedom of affiliated sections to act according to the particular political, social, and economic circumstances which they have to face.

The L.S.I. should also raise the imprisonment of political offenders in Russia and Georgia, and the suppression of liberty of speech, Press, and organisation, besides the disintegrating effect of Communist policies within the political and industrial movements in practically every country.

Annual Conference

THERE are now only four weeks to the Conference. Ballot papers for Divisional members of the N.A.C. will be sent out this Saturday. They must be returned to the respective Divisional Offices by March 29.

We requested that all delegation forms should be completed and forwarded to us by Monday next, March 8. So far, very few have come in. Unless branches co-operate with us by notifying their delegates as early as possible, we cannot guarantee to obtain railway tickets for them. When the receipt for delegation fee and pooled fare is sent to the branch secretary, a railway form is enclosed, which the secretary should hand immediately to the delegate to be filled in and returned to us. We can then order the railway ticket.

* * *

IN response to requests, there will be a special conference on the subject of agriculture in connection with the Annual Conference of the I.L.P. at Whitley Bay. Interested delegates will be invited to have tea together at 5 p.m. on Monday, following which E. F. Wise will open the discussion on Agricultural Policy. Ernest Hunter, Chairman of the Agricultural Policy Committee, will preside, and John Paton, I.L.P. Organising Secretary will reply to points on organisation. It is hoped that this conference may prove valuable to the party and to the rural areas.

* * *

THE usual practice of discussing internal matters without the presence of the public will be followed at the forthcoming Annual Conference at Whitley Bay. Visitors will be admitted to the public gallery on presenting their I.L.P. membership cards. All I.L.P. members intending to be visitors are, therefore, urged to remember to bring their cards.

The Guild of Youth

THE National Guild Committee met in London on Sunday, February 28. In view of the very heavy agenda, we started at 10 a.m., but, despite this early start, carried on until 7 p.m.

There was considerable correspondence, but I can only briefly mention the most important items. A letter was read from the London Federation asking the N.G.C. to appoint a representative to address its annual aggregate meeting on March 27. It was agreed that Doris Sharp should speak on behalf of the N.G.C.

In response to a request from the I.L.P. for two Guild speakers for the official conference demonstrations, it was decided that James Macgowan should speak at the Whitley Bay demonstration, and George Darling at the Newcastle demonstration.

* * *

A REQUEST was submitted from the North-East Guild Conference secretary asking for Guild speakers for the I.L.P. meetings being held on Easter Sunday evening. I shall be glad to have the names of any delegates who are staying over until the Sunday night, and who are willing that their names be submitted to Comrade Nixon, of the North-East, for this purpose. Any comrade willing to stay over will be provided with free hospitality.

It was decided to submit to Divisional Councils for their consideration and suggestions a letter from Arthur Ponsonby asking for the co-operation of the Guild of Youth in obtaining signatures for the Peace Letter. It was also agreed that this matter should be raised in connection with the Peace Week of Youth.

The National Committee decided to affiliate to the British League of Esperantist Socialists.

Arising from a request from the I.L.P. Publication Department that the Guild should appoint a Literature Editor, it was decided that Clare Brockway was the most suitable person to do this work.

* * *

THE Annual Report was considered paragraph by paragraph and, after slight drafting amendments, was adopted. Conference arrangements were also considered.

In connection with the Annual Conference, so far I have only received intimation of about a dozen delegates. I hope this does not mean that the attendance of delegates is going to be poor. We have 182 Guilds; we want 182 delegates at least. Don't forget, I want all delegation forms, together with half conference fee and pooled fare, by March 13.

The following is the result of the ballot for Divisional members:—

Scotland.—James Macgowan, David Skinner.
North-East.—Arthur Tetley.
Yorkshire.—Harold Pointer.
Midlands.—G. R. England.
East Anglia.—J. Irving.
London.—A. N. Bransom.
South-West.—J. A. Hill.
Wales.—B. R. Vaughan.
Lancashire.—George Darling.

* * *

SUBMITTING a report on the editorial side of *The Flame*, Clare Brockway stated that she continued to receive criticisms. About one-third of her critics thought the paper was too political, while two-thirds wanted more political articles. She said there was a general demand for short, bright paragraphs on topical events, and also for a serial story or short stories. She was endeavouring to meet these demands. Two Guild comrades had promised to write humorous articles for future issues.

Francis MacLachlan, business manager, reported that an extra sale of 1,500 copies per month would put *The Flame* on a paying basis, and it was therefore decided to start a Circulation Campaign.

* * *

THE Corresponding Secretary's report showed an increase of 25 Guilds since the last meeting and five in the process of formation. Guild of Youth Join Forms were now ready, the price being 5s. per thousand.

It was agreed to ask A. N. Bransom to represent the Guild on the Peace Week of Youth Committee.

Arthur Tetley was chosen as our delegate to the International Youth Congress at Amsterdam.

Designs were submitted for a new badge, but it was decided to leave this matter over until the Conference decision on the matter was known.

D. S.

Special Effort Fund

Aberdare	£ s. d.	Kensal Rise	£ s. d.	Treharris	£ s. d.	Branch	£ s. d.
Accrington	2 3 0	Kettering	1 5 0	Walsall	2 0 0	contributions	
Annfield Plain	4 0 0	Kirkdale	9 0 0	Walworth	1 0 0	previously	
Arbroath	1 12 0	Littleboro'	0 8 6	Woodford	0 2 6	acknowledged	£1,035 19 3
Ardswick	4 0 0	Luton	1 0 0	Woodside	4 0 0		
Baldon	2 0 0	Macmerry	1 10 0	Woolwich	2 0 0		
Bamber Br.	1 0 0	March	0 13 9	Workington	12 0 0		
Bankington	1 0 0	Marrhill	2 0 0	Yateley	1 0 0		
Batley	1 10 0	Nelson	20 0 0	Ystrad			
Battersea	2 0 0	Newarthen	1 0 0	Mynach	2 9 7		
Birmingham		Newcastle					
ham, W.	2 11 3	Central	5 0 0				
Braintree	2 0 0	Newport	5 0 0				
Bramley	4 0 0	North Kensington	1 5 0				
Brighton	0 5 0	Nottingham	1 10 0				
Brighton & Hove	0 10 0	Old Swan	0 11 6				
Bristol	10 0 0	Pontypriid	2 0 0				
Bristol, E.	1 5 0	Raunds	2 0 0				
Brodick	1 0 0	Reading	2 0 0				
Broughton	1 10 0	Richmond	2 0 0				
Cardiff, Cn.	0 10 0	Surrey	4 4 0				
Cardiff City	6 4 0	Rochedale	9 7 0				
Carlisle	1 0 0	Rounds Gr.	0 10 0				
Carnoustie	2 0 0	Rutherglen	3 0 0				
Chatter-le-Street	1 3 6	N. St. Pancras					
Cleckheaton	1 0 0	cras, contributed by S.E.					
Clevedon	0 5 0	Parceels					
Consett	3 0 0	per Dan					
Cwmavon	3 0 0	Patterson	3 10 0				
Darlington	9 0 0	Shoebury	0 8 0				
Dorchester	0 6 0	ness					
Durham Cr.	0 15 0	Sittingbourne	0 10 0				
E. Kilbridge	2 0 0	South End					
Edinburgh		Stockport	5 5 0				
Central	17 0 0	Southwark	1 10 0				
Edinburgh		Sparkhill	0 12 0				
North	1 0 3	Springwell	1 0 0				
Enfield	3 0 0	Stanningley	0 10 0				
Erith	2 0 0	Strand					
Gateshead	20 0 0	Fleet St.					
Goring	0 13 0	at Trade					
Gorton	2 2 0	Union					
Haltwhistle	1 0 0	Meeting	5 5 3				
Hackney	3 0 0	Seadonote	2 0 0				
Hamilton	3 0 0	Tillicoultry	2 0 0				
Hoylake	2 3 8						
Irvine	2 0 0						

Summer School in Belgium

BRADFORD I.L.P. are inaugurating a new development. They have taken a Belgian Labour College, at Uccle, on the outskirts of Brussels, for a fortnight in August. Already they have far more applicants than the College will hold, and extra accommodation is being sought elsewhere. The College is beautifully situated in its own grounds, and it is hoped to manage the whole tour at a cost of about £5 per head per week.

Bradford has set an example which might well be followed by many other large branches and Federations.

Divisional and Federation Reports

North-East Division.—A Conference was held in the Town Hall, Gateshead, on Saturday, February 20, and attracted a large number of delegates and visitors. It was presided over by W. P. Richardson, and P. J. Dollan was the speaker. Comrade Dollan sketched the industrial policy of the I.L.P. The old capitalist system, he said, was breaking up, and the time had come for a closer co-ordination between the trade unions. The need for every member of a trade union branch beginning to study the history of his industry was stressed. Then came the question of the living wage. A Commission could be set up, with representatives from each trade union and a representative from the housewives of the country, and after careful consideration a minimum wage for all workers could be fixed, irrespective of whether he was a labourer or a journalist. Very keen criticism and discussion took place before the close of the Conference.

Berks, Bucks and Oxon Federation.—Farmers, agricultural workers and political students from many parts of the country attended the week-end school, organised by this Federation, and held at Reading. Mr. Wise showed by startling figures how agricultural production had declined. In his second lecture Mr. Wise dealt with problems of land tenure and ownership. He

outlined the scheme proposed by the I.L.P. Agricultural Committee. The third lecture dealt with prices and marketing.

The programme of the school was varied by the introduction of a discussion on Socialism and the Little Theatre Movement by Miles-Malleson, and by a social evening at St. Giles' Hall on Saturday evening, when Mr. Malleson read *Black 'Ell*. The musical programme included songs by Miss Cora Durnford, Miss E. Wooldridge, Mr. W. J. Souch, B.Sc., Mr. F. Hill, Dr. Gandy, and Mr. Frank Jacques; and violin solos by Mr. Jack Pitts.

The school was well attended, the discussions most helpful; and keen appreciation of the value of the school was expressed by the students.

Merthyr Federation.—A special joint meeting of Federation delegates and branch officials was held in Bentley's Hall, Merthyr, on Saturday, February 27. Comrade R. R. Davies (Merthyr Branch) presided, and there were present representatives of every branch in the area. Comrade R. Stanton (Divisional Secretary) addressed the meeting, and gave a report of the recommendations of the Committee of Federation Secretaries for the re-organisation of Federations in the Welsh Division. A good discussion ensued, in which all the branches took part.

I.L.P. Activities

Branch Reports

Rootle held its weekly meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 24, and Comrade R. Edwards, of Edgell, treated us to a very interesting and clever address on "The Need for an I.L.P. Guild of Youth." The discussion which followed was in the main directed against the Youth Movement. It was feared that the vitality of branches would be sapped.

Cardiff.—Mr. J. H. Hudson, M.P., addressed a large meeting at the Imperial Cinema on Sunday, February 28, on "War and the Defeat of Socialism." Comrade Harold Watkins occupied the chair. The speaker said that although the Tories talked about "the spirit of Locarno," their feet were shackled by the impedimenta of war. But Armistice Day, with its two minutes silence, was serving a purpose the militarists never meant it to do. Comrade Hudson appealed to each person present to take an individual resolve not to aid or take part in preparation for war.

On Sunday, March 7, Mr. Ponsonby, M.P., speaks on the individual's refusal to take part in war.

Chelsea.—On Friday, March 12th, at 8 p.m., there will be a meeting in Chelsea Town Hall, when Mrs. Stan Harding and J. Allen Skinner will speak on "The Secret Service." Chairman, Colonel C. L. Malone. All seats free.

Eastleigh excelled itself by organising a large area conference on Financial Policy on Saturday, Feb. 27. Councillor R. H. Roberts, the Branch President, presided over 150 delegates from Divisional Labour Parties, Trades Councils, Women's Sections, Women's Co-operative Guilds, Trade Unions, Ward Committees, and I.L.P. branches from Winchester, Southampton, Portsmouth, Fareham, Gosport, and Andover. Dr. Hugh Dalton, M.P., gave a masterly exposition of Credit and Banking, and moved a resolution calling for the Nationalisation of the Banking System and the setting up of municipal banks. A. T. Bennett seconded in a witty and clever speech. The resolution was unanimously carried. All NEW LEADERS were sold out. The county press was well represented. It is hoped to organise a conference on Foreign Policy shortly.

Grimsby and Cleethorpes.—The Rev. R. Sorensen was our speaker on Sunday, February 28. He gave an inspiring address on "Education for the Workers," laying particular stress on the need for secondary education and for spiritual and moral education. The Rev. Cotton-Smith, a Grimsby vicar, supported him, at the risk of being ostracised as he has often been in the past. The meeting was commented upon by the leading London Sunday papers, owing to an application to the local magistrates for permission to sing four Labour hymns.

Leeds Central.—A new branch has been formed for Central Leeds, and inquiries for membership will be welcomed by the secretary, Mrs. F. E. Hutson, 130, Hyde Park Road, Leeds. Thirty members have already enrolled, and a constructive educational programme is being drawn up. We hope to build up a strong organisation in readiness for next winter.

London Central.—We are very glad to be able to report the continued success of the Socialist Forum. On February 24 the room was packed when Bertrand Russell led the discussion on "Psychology and Politics." He warned us of the new weapons which psychology put into the hands of the holders of power—"every official likes his followers to be tame." It behoved us to get democracy established "before the technique of oppression was perfected." Under the permanent chairmanship of Ernest Hunter, the level of the discussions is steadily rising. March 3, Bernard Shaw on his rather individual definition of Socialism as "equality of income." March 10, Roden Buxton will go into the question of the responsibility of the individual Socialist under the

existing system. On the 17th an enemy will be entertained in the person of J. M. Hogge, the left-wing Liberal, who will bravely declare why he is not a Socialist. The following Wednesday G. D. H. Cole will give his latter-day thoughts on socialisation, and on the last day of the month John Beckett, M.P., will raise the fundamental issue of whether Socialists can use Parliament.

West Birmingham.—Looking over the work of the past year, we feel the branch has every reason to be proud of its position, for we have a stabilised membership of 70. Our City Council and Board of Guardians representatives have given a report of their work on their respective bodies. During the summer months open-air meetings have been held in all parts of the division. Our Labour Church has been an unqualified success. We feel that the thanks of the branch are due to our young accomplished pianist and comrade, Miss Bessie Brown. During the year a Women's Group was formed. Fortnightly meetings are held, and points of policy discussed. As a result of their efforts, a sum of £8 has already been handed over to branch funds. A Guild of Youth was also started during the year's working, and promises to develop into a strong, virile section.

West Derby now numbers about 100 members, and the meetings reveal a lively interest. The Speakers' Class and Library are proving of vital assistance to the fast approaching open-air propaganda season.

The weekly public lectures are attended by an audience which is critical and yet helpful. The Branch Committee, in conjunction with the Social Committee, is running monthly dances, weekly whist drives and fortnightly women's afternoon socials. On April 8 the branch will celebrate its second anniversary with a knife and fork tea and social and dance.

Classified Advertisements

The rate for Branch Advertisements is 6d. a line of 5 words, and 3d. of an inch for 5s. For Sale, Miscellaneous and Want Advertisements 1s. a line of 5 words, prepaid. All classified advertisements must reach this office by Tuesday morning at latest.

I.L.P. Meetings

IF YOU ARE
LABOUR
LEND US YOUR AID.

Harpden Public Hall, next THURSDAY, March 11, at 8.15.
The Welwyn Folk Players
(of Welwyn Garden City) will present
THE SILVER BOX.
By John Galsworthy.
Tickets, 3s. 9d., 2s. 4d., 1s. 2d., from
Valentine's Library, Harpenden.

Limbury, nr. Luton,
Norton Road School.
R. C. Walhead, M.P.
and Philip Millwood,
Chairman, J. W. Watson.
NEXT FRIDAY, March 12, at 7.30.
Admission Free. Please come over to
help us.

I.L.P. LIVERPOOL FEDERATION

A Demonstration
will be held in
PICTON HALL,
on Sunday, March 7, 1926; 8 p.m.
Speakers:
J. TINKER, M.P.
FRED LONGDEN,
S. REEVES, J.P.
Tickets 6d., 1s., 1s. 6d., 2s.
Stewards from Branches, attend 7 p.m.

I.L.P.—STRAND THEATRE OF IDEALS

(Given by Arthur Bouchier).
March 7, 7 p.m. Concert arranged by
RAE ROBERTSON.
Artists: Owen Brynwyn (baritone),
Miss Morcia Stotesbury (violinist), Rae
Robertson and Ethel Bartlett in piano-
forte solos and duets. West-End I.L.P.
Orchestra. Admission free. Reserved
seats by postal application, with stamped
addressed envelope, to Reginald Stamp,
14, Gt. George Street, Westminster. An
earnest appeal is made to all who appreciate
these evenings to send small and
large donations towards expenses of the
series.

LEICESTER I.L.P.—F. Montague,
M.P., Corn Exchange, at 6.45 p.m.,
Sunday evening. March 13, Saturday
evening, Social, Emanuel Ch. School.
Guest, Malcolm MacDonald.

NO. 9 DIVISIONAL COUNCIL and
LIVERPOOL FEDERATION, I.L.P.
A Special Conference to consider the
present position of "THE UNEMPLOYED
AND DEMAND WORK OR
MAINTENANCE" will be held in the
PICTON LECTURE (Small) HALL,
William Brown Street, Liverpool, on
SATURDAY, March 6, 1926. Opener:
Charles Wilson, C.C., supported by Fred
Longden (Birmingham). Chair will be
taken at 3 p.m. by Coun. E. Sandham,
Chorley (Labour Candidate, Kirkdale).

NORTH ISLINGTON I.L.P.
PONSONBY PEACE MEETING.
FRIDAY, March 26, 8 p.m.
"Upper Holloway Chapel Lecture Hall."
Grove Road, N.19.
Speakers:
Ald. E. G. CULPIN, Mr. MORGAN
JONES, M.P., Rev. JAMES BARR,
M.A., M.P., Lt.-Colonel C. V. HEALY.
Tickets: 1s. and 6d. from Mr. Kisten-
macher, 100, Marlborough Road, N.19.

SHEFFIELD I.L.P.—Sunday, March 7,
at 7, in Scala, Winter Street, A.
Bouchier, M.A. (Oxon), on "Socialism in
Relation to Art and Culture."

THE GOLDERS GREEN I.L.P.
Dramatic Group.—At the Hall,
Bridge Lane, N.W.11, Sunday, March 7,
at 7.30. "The Shewing up of Blanco
Posnet," by Bernard Shaw. Admission
Free. Collection.

Other Meetings

ARTHUR PONSONBY, M.P.—Peace
A Letter Rally, Brotherhood Church,
Southgate Road, Hackney, Thursday,
March 11, at 8 p.m. Chair, F. R. Swan
(Minister). Come along.

CAISTER CAMP RE-UNION.
SOCIAL AND DANCE,
CAXTON HALL,
WESTMINSTER,
SATURDAY.
March 13, 6 to 11 p.m.

Tickets, 2s. 6d. each.
Apply,
J. Fletcher Dodd,
Caister-on-Sea.
Camp opens at Easter.

Apartments

COMFORTABLE ROOM TO LET,
good food, well cooked, and strict
sanitary cleanliness; N.W.5. Access-
ible.—Write Box 611, NEW LEADER.

COMFORTABLY furnished bedrooms,
with breakfast, dinner optional.
Suitable professional or business gentle-
men. Convenient tubes and 'buses to all
parts. 'Phone, gas fires.—23, Craven
Road, Lancaster Gate, W.2.

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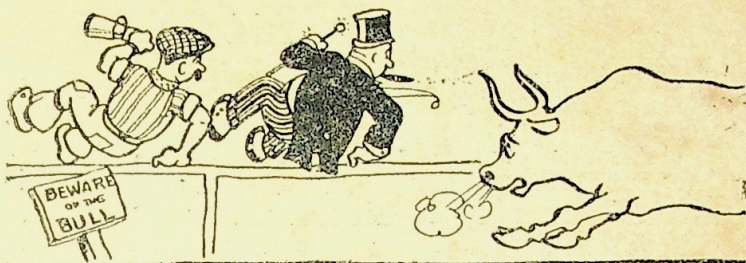
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It Occurs to Me

A WORD should be said about the importance of election addresses.

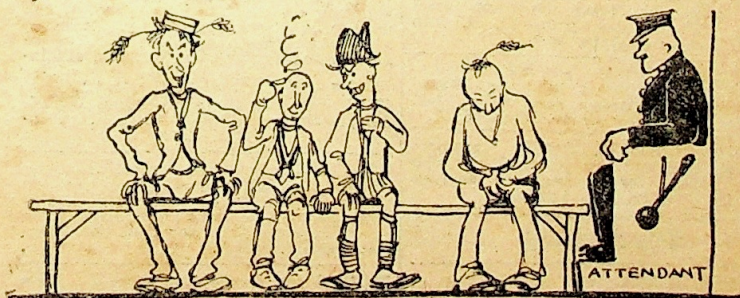
I have before me that of Sir Alfred Hopkinson, Conservative candidate in the by-election for the Combined English Universities Constituency. It is an excellent example of what an address should be, characterised as it is by that strict avoidance of ambiguous phrases and that use of exact definition of principle which enables one to see at a glance the candidate's whole position. For instance, he says, "Union of Classes.—The co-operation of all citizens for the good of all, facing together the difficulties and dangers that threaten, making steady progress step by step towards an ideal which they look forward to approach nearer year by year."



Facing together the dangers that threaten

Nothing could be clearer than that. It isn't everybody who would lay himself out for his constituents to that extent. The constituency is a large one, and I have been told that already 973 voters have written to him asking for loans varying from 5s. to £500, by way of giving him an opportunity of "facing together the difficulties and dangers that threaten," and that over a hundred engaged couples have applied for assistance "towards an ideal which they look forward to year by year," in shapes varying from a two-seater to a furnished house. I like a man who is prepared to do something tangible instead of merely making empty promises.

Another statement that should make a good impression is "Selfish and ostentatious luxury is the worst foe of the union of classes." I can imagine him at a meeting answering questions. Someone will get up and say, "If the speaker is against the display of luxury, will he explain why he drives about the poorer parts of the town in a motor-car, while his wife wears a fur coat?" And Sir Alfred will reply, "My car, sir, is an X.Y.Z. 1921 model, and my wife's coat is a half-length cone," and he will sit down conscious of having cleared his character and made his opponents look silly. This attitude towards luxury may, of course, lose him the support of the people who drive six-cylinder cars and wear musquash or beaver coats; but Sir Alfred won't mind that; he is a man of principle. Besides, I hear that, owing to his example, a number of people have already exchanged their Daimlers and Armstrong-Siddeleys for Rover 8's and Austin 7's, and that one Tory squire, who used to ride about the village on a Sunbeam Modele-de-luxe bicycle with a little oil-bath, has given it away, and now rides a road-racing machine with fixed wheel and dropped handle-bars as being more democratic. Moreover, a number of his lady supporters have given their fur coats to their maids, and are now wearing only tweeds and stockinette. Such is the power for good of a politician who means what he says.



Men whose opinions are independent—

But I think the strongest and most significant plank in Sir Alfred's platform is his attitude to the House of Lords. He believes in an "efficient second chamber." This does not mean that in the matter of housing he necessarily opposes his co-Sir Alfred and fellow-Tory, Sir Alfred Mond, who, you remember, thinks that one room is enough for young working-class couples. He thinks there ought to be "a real Senate, composed of those who . . . can exercise independent judgment."

Now an independent judgment is the finest quality a statesman can have. It is not always advisable in other professions. There have, for instance, been cases of judges and football referees whose judgments were so independent that they were no use at all. I knew a referee whose judgment was so stand-offish that it often had nothing to do with the game, so that once, when appealed to for off-side, he replied, "How very bourgeois!" and

by Yaffle

on another occasion he refused to allow a penalty-kick because he said the centre-forward's style was cramped and his boots dated. After that, as soon as he left the hospital, he went to America, where he founded a sect called the Cud-Chewers, and died worth three blocks of railway shares, which, unfortunately for his wife, the cat ate in the night.

Then there was the case of Mr. Justice Pooble-Smith—one of the Pooble-Smiths of Sussex, the capital of which, as you know, is Lewes on the Ouse. He had a judgment which was so independent that it simply did what it liked, until finally, when he came to give his summing-up in the Mumbles murder case, he said, "If, after hearing the evidence, the jury thinks that the accused did kill his wife, then the jury is barmy. Not that she didn't deserve it, making the poor man wear vests like that in August. No wonder he had an alibi. Any man of sense would have a permanent alibi from a wife who, on the prosecution's own showing, used to play 'I want to be happy' on the piano every Sunday afternoon. And now, seeing that I have spent the whole day with the hideous face of the prosecuting counsel before me, I think it's time I went home to tea. Judge not, that ye be not judged. Good afternoon." So they found him a job as censor of plays, where judgments don't cut any ice.

In the House of Lords, however, independent judgments are badly needed. It is felt that as an antidote to the Party System we need legislators of independent opinion. Indeed, it is a common thing for a member of the Upper House to get up and make a speech on a Bill only to find that his opinion has gone off on its own somewhere. Frequently, if you say to a Peer, "Have you any opinions on so-and-so, Lord Whatsit?" as like as not he will reply, "Sometimes," or, "I did have one, but I left it in the train."

That is why Lord Banbury does so well in the Upper House; he can speak for hours without his judgment or opinions having any bearing at all on the subject under discussion.



—are needed in the House of Lords

The most independently-opinioned man in the House is Lord Balderdam. His crest is a turnip rampant on a field verdant, and his motto "*Mens magna et arbitrii liberi*," meaning that he is broad-minded and of independent opinion and can see all sides of a question without being unduly influenced by any, which, as any botanist will tell you, is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a turnip. Lord Balderdam's opinions are so independent that by the time he reached his eighty-seventh year they never turned up more than once or twice in a Session, leaving him with nothing but that careless hauteur that marks the breed of the Balderdams. People who do not know the political value of independent opinions will often say, "Sad to see the old man breaking up like this. It's in the family, you know," and they will touch their foreheads significantly. But it isn't what they think; it is his independent opinion that makes him behave like that.

On one occasion the House was afraid that the Earl was going to give a biased opinion. It was during the second reading of the Dogs (Statutory Thickness of Wire for Muzzles of, 1922) Bill, on which the Earl was known to have an opinion so definite that they feared he must be a partisan of some sort.

But fortunately, when he rose to speak, his opinion asserted its independence and left him, and he said, "Diddle-diddle Dimpling, my son John," and sat down, having preserved the reputation of the House and his family for independent thought.

So on the whole I think I shall vote for Sir Alfred Hopkinson. At least, I would, only I find that Wormwood Scrubs is not included in the list of "Combined Universities."

(Illustrations by Flambo)

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